THE VISION OF WILLIAM

CONCERNING

Piers the Plowman

IN THREE PARALLEL TEXTS

TOGETHER WITH

Richard the Redeless

BY WILLIAM LANGLAND

(ABOUT 1362–1399 A.D.)

VOLUME I

TEXT

EDITED FROM NUMEROUS MANUSCRIPTS

WITH PREFACE, NOTES, AND A GLOSSARY BY

WALTER W. SKEAT

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PIERS THE PLOWMAN

AND

RICHARD THE REDELESS

WILLIAM LANGLAND

Oxford University Press, Ely House, London W.1
GLASGOW NEW YORK TORONTO MELBOURNE WELLINGTON
CAPE TOWN SALISBURY IBADAN NAIROBI LUSAKA ADDIS ABABA
BOMBAY CALCUTTA MADRAS KARACHI LAHORE DACCA
KUALA LUMPUR SINGAPORE HONG KONG TOKYO

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WITH PREFACE, NOTES, AND A GLOSSARY

BY THE

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VOL. I.—TEXT

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

KVCC KALAMAZOO VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE LIBRARY

23544

FIRST EDITION 1886
REPRINTED LITHOGRAPHICALLY IN GREAT BRITAIN
BY LOWE & BRYDONE, PRINTERS, LTD., LONDON
FROM SHEETS OF THE FIRST EDITION, 1924
WITH ADDITION OF BIBLIOGRAPHY, 1954. 1961, 1965, 1968, 1969

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[1] In the C-text, the *Vita de Dobet* begins with Pass. xviii.

THE VISION OF WILLIAM

CONCERNING

PIERS THE PLOWMAN.

[In the following pages all three versions of this Poem are exhibited in parallel texts. The A-text, or earliest version, appears at the upper part of the pages, as far as it goes. Being much shorter than the others, it disappears from the latter portion of the text.

The B-text, or second version, appears on the lower part of the left-hand pages; towards the end, it occupies the whole of each left-hand page.

The C-text, or latest version, appears on the lower part of the right-hand pages; towards the end, it occupies the whole of each right-hand page.

The A-text is printed as it occurs in V = Vernon MS. (in the Bodleian Library). All deviations from V are shewn in the foot-notes, and are taken from other MSS., viz. T = Trin. Coll. Cam. R. 3. 14; H = Harl. 875, Brit. Museum; U = Univ. Coll. Oxford; H_2 = Harl. 6041; D = Douce 323 (Bodleian Library). V is imperfect, ending at Pass. XI. 180; the rest of this Passus is from T. Pass. XII is from MS. Rawl. Poet. 137, collated with U throughout lines 1–19; the rest of this Passus occurs in the Rawlinson MS. and in the Ingilby MS. *only*. Observe that the text in V abounds with *Southern* forms, due to the scribe.

The B-text is printed from L = MS. Laud 851 (Bodleian Library). All deviations from L are given in the foot-notes, and are taken from other MSS., viz. W = the MS. printed by Mr. Wright (Trin. Coll. Cam. B. 15. 17); O = Oriel 79; R = Rawl. Poet. 38; C = Camb. Univ. Lib. Dd. 1. 17; B = Bodley 814; C_2 = Camb. Univ. Lib. Ll. 4. 14; and Y = Mr. Yates Thompson's MS.

The C-text is printed from P = MS. Phillipps 8231. All deviations from P are shewn in the foot notes, many being mere corrections (due to collation) of defective spellings. The other MSS. are E = Laud 656; I = Ilchester MS.; M = Museum MS. (Cotton, Vesp. B. 16); F = Camb. Univ. Lib. Ff. 5. 35; G = Camb. Univ. Lib. Dd. 3. 13; S = Corpus Christi Coll. Camb. 293; B = Bodley 814; K = (Kenelm) Digby 171 (Bodleian Library); T = Trin. Coll. Cam. R. 3. 14.]

Prologus.

IN a somer sesun · whon softe was the sonne,
I schop me in-to a schroud · a scheep as I were;
In habite of an hermite · vn-holy of werkes,
Wende I wydene in this world · wondres to here.
Bote in a Mayes morwnynge · on Maluerne hulles
Me bi-fel a ferly · a feyrie me thouhte;
I was weori of wandringe · and wente me to reste

INCIPIT LIBER DE PETRO PLOWMAN.

Prologus.

IN a somer seson · whan soft was the sonne,
I shope me in shroudes · as I a shepe were,
In habite as an heremite · vnholy of workes,
Went wyde in this world · wondres to here.
Ac on a May mornynge · on Maluerne hulles
Me byfel a ferly · of fairy me thouȝte;
I was wery forwandred · and went me to reste
Vnder a brode banke · bi a bornes side,
And as I lay and lened · and loked in the wateres,
I slombred in a slepyng · it sweyued so merye.
Thañne gan I to meten · a merueilouse sweuene,
That I was in a wildernesse · wist I neuer where,
As I bihelde in-to the est · an hiegh to the sonne,
I seigh a toure on a toft · trielich ymaked;
A depe dale binethe · a dongeon there-inne,
With depe dyches and derke · and dredful of sight.
A faire felde ful of folke · fonde I there bytwene,
Of alle maner of men · the mene and the riche,
Worchyng and wandryng · as the worlde asketh.

A. 14. triȝely T; triely U; wonderliche VH. C. 2. me MFS; P *om.*

Vndur a brod banke · bi a bourne syde,
And as I lay and leonede · and lokede on the watres,
I slumberde in a slepyng · hit sownede so murie.
Thenne gon I meeten · a meruelous sweuene,
That I was in a wildernesse · wuste I neuer where,
And as I beo-heold in-to the est · an-heiȝ to the sonne,
I sauh a tour on a toft · triȝely i-maket;
A deop dale bi-neothe · a dungun ther-inne,
With deop dich and derk · and dredful of siht.
A feir feld ful of folk · fond I ther bi-twene,
Of alle manér of men · the mene and the riche,
Worchinge and wondringe · as the world asketh.

HIC INCIPIT VISIO WILLELMI DE PETRO PLOUHMAN.

PASSUS I.

IN a somere seyson · whan softe was the sonne,
Y shop me in-to shrobbis · as y a shepherde were,
In abit as an ermite · vnholy of werkes,
Ich wente forth in the worlde · wonders to hure,
And sawe meny cellis · and selcouthe thynges.
Ac on a May morwenyng · on Maluerne hulles
Me byfel for to slepe · for weyrynesse of wandryng;
And in a launde as ich lay · lenede ich and slepte,
And merueylously me mette · as ich may ȝow telle;
Al the welthe of this worlde · and the woo bothe,
Wynkyng as it were · wyterly ich saw hyt,
Of tryuthe and of tricherye · of tresoun and of gyle,
Al ich saw slepynge · as ich shal ȝow telle.
Esteward ich byhulde · after the sonne,
And sawe a toure, as ich trowede · truthe was ther-ynne;
Westwarde ich waitede · in a whyle after,
And sawe a deep dale · deth, as ich lyuede,
Wonede in tho wones · and wyckede spiritus.
A fair feld, ful of folke · fonde ich ther bytwyne,
Alle manere of men · the mene and the ryche,
Worchynge and wandrynge · as the worlde asketh.

---

a MFSE; P *om.* 4. worle P. 16. wyle P. 19. fol (*for* ful) P.

Summe putten hem to the plouȝ · and pleiden hem ful seldene,
In eringe and in sowynge · swonken ful harde,
That monie of theos wasturs · in glotonye distruen.
And summe putten hem to pruide · apparaylden hem ther-after,
In cuntinaunce of clothinge · queinteliche de-gyset;
To preyere and to penaunce · putten heom monye,
For loue of vr lord · liueden ful harde,
In hope for to haue · heuene-riche blisse;
As ancres and hermytes · that holdeth hem in heore celles,
Coueyte not in cuntre · to carien a-boute,
For non likerous lyflode · heore licam to plese.
And summe chosen chaffare · to cheeuen the bettre,

Some putten hem to the plow · pleyed ful seldə,
In settyng and in sowyng · swonken ful harde,
And wonnen that wastours · with glotonye destruyeth.
And some putten hem to pruyde · apparailed hem there-after,
In contenaunce of clothyng · comen disgised.
In prayers and in penance · putten hem manye,
Al for loue of owre lorde · lyueden ful streyte,
In hope forto haue · heueneriche blisse;
As ancres and heremites · that holden hem in here selles,
And coueiten nought in contre · to kairen aboute,
For no likerous liflode · her lykam to plese.
And somme chosen chaffare · they cheuen the bettere,
As it semeth to owre syȝt · that suche men thryueth;
And somme murthes to make · as mynstralles conneth,
And geten gold with here glee · synneles, I leue.
Ac iapers and iangelers · Iudas chylderen,
Feynen hem fantasies · and foles hem maketh,
And han here witte at wille · to worche ȝif thei sholde.
That Poule precheth of hem · I nel nought preue it here;
Qui turpiloquium loquitur · is Luciferes hyne.
Bidders and beggeres · fast aboute ȝede,
With her belies and her bagges · of bred ful ycrammed;
Fayteden for here fode · fouȝten atte ale;
In glotonye, god it wote · gon hij to bedde,

A. 34. *This line is from* T; *also in* HUD; V *omits it.* 41. bratful T; bretful H_2; bredful UD; faste VH. **B**. 20. putten W; put L; *see* l. 23. 34. *Read* giltles, *as in* Text A. 39. is—hyne W; L *om.* 41. belies W; bely L. bagges WCO; bagge L. **C**. 22. pute P. 23. sawyng P.

As hit semeth to vre siht · that suche men scholden;
And summe murthhes to maken · as munstrals cunne,
And gete gold with here gle · giltles, I trowe.
Bote iapers and iangelers · Iudas children,
Founden hem fantasyes · and fooles hem maaden,
And habbeth wit at heor wille · to worchen ȝif hem luste.
That Poul precheth of hem · I dar not preouen heere;
Qui loquitur turpiloquium · hee is Luciferes hyne.
Bidders and beggers · faste a-boute eoden,
Til heor bagges and heore balies · weren bratful I-crommet;
Feyneden hem for heore foode · fouȝten atte alle;
In glotonye, God wot · gon heo to bedde,

Sommē putte hem to plow · and pleiden ful seylde,
In settyng and in sowyng · swonken ful harde,
And wonne that thuse wasters · with glotenye destroyeth.
Somme putte hem to pruyde · and parailede hem ther-after,
In contenaunce and in clothynge · in meny kynne gyse;
In praiers and in penaunces · putten hem manye,
Al for the loue of oure lorde · lyueden ful harde,
In hope to haue a gode ende · and heuene-ryche blysse;
As ancres and eremites · that holden hem in hure cellys,
Coueytynge noȝt in contrees · to carien a-boute
For no lykerouse lyflode · hure lykame to plese.
And somme chosen cheffare · they cheuede the betere,
As hit semeth to oure syght · that soche men thryueth.
And somme murthes to make · as mynstrals conneth,
That wollen neyther swynke ne swete · bote swery grete othes,
And fynde vp foule fantesyes · and foles hem maken,
And hauen witte at wylle · to worche yf they wolde.
That Paul prechith of hem · prouen hit ich myghte,
Qui turpiloquium loquitur · ys Lucyfers knaue.
Bydders and beggers · faste a-boute ȝoden,
Tyl hure bagge and hure bely · were bretful ycrammyd,
Faytynge for hure fode · and fouhten atten ale.
In glotenye, god wot · goth they to bedde,

---

24. wit P. distryeth P. 26. contenuance P. 28. lyueden ESM; lyuend P. 29. goud (*for* gode) P. 33. cheffede P; cheued S. 42. bretful MFE; bredful P. 44. god wot MF; tho gomes PS.

And ryseth vp with ribaudye · this Roberdes knaues;
Sleep and sleuȝthe · suweth hem euere.
Pilgrimes and palmers · plihten hem to-gederes
For to seche seint Ieme · and seintes at Roome;
Wenten forth in heore wey · with mony wyse tales,
And hedden leue to lyȝen · al heore lyf aftir.
Ermytes on an hep · with hokide staues,
Wenten to Walsyngham · & here wenchis aftir;
Grete lobres and longe · that loth weore to swynke
Clotheden hem in copes · to beo knowen for bretheren;
And summe schopen hem to hermytes · heore ese to haue.

And risen with ribaudye · tho Roberdes knaues;
Slepe and sori sleuthe · seweth hem eure.
Pilgrymes and palmers · pliȝted hem togidere
To seke seynt Iames · and seyntes in Rome.
Thei went forth in here wey · with many wise tales,
And hadden leue to lye · al here lyf after.
I seigh somme that seiden · thei had ysouȝt seyntes;
To eche a tale that thei tolde · here tonge was tempred to lye,
More than to sey soth · it semed bi here speche.
Heremites on an heep · with hoked staues,
Wenten to Walsyngham · and here wenches after;
Grete lobyes and longe · that loth were to swynke,
Clotheden hem in copis · to ben knowen fram othere;
And shopen hem heremites · here ese to haue.
I fonde there freris · alle the foure ordres,
Preched the peple · for profit of hem-seluen,
Glosed the gospel · as hem good lyked,
For coueitise of copis · construed it as thei wolde.
Many of this maistres freris · mowe clothen hem at lykyng,
For here money and marchandise · marchen togideres.
For sith charite hath be chapman · and chief to shryue lordes,
Many ferlis han fallen · in a fewe ȝeris.
But holychirche and hij · holde better togideres,
The moste myschief on molde · is mountyng wel faste.
There preched a pardonere · as he a prest were,

A. 49. aftir THUD; tyme V. 50, 51. *These lines are from* TUH$_2$D; VH *omit them.* 54. hem THD; V *om.* 61. and THUD; V *om.* B. 67.

I font there freres · all the foure ordres,
Prechinge the peple · for profyt of heore wombes,
Glosynge the gospel · as hem good liketh,
For couetyse of copes · construeth hit ille;
For monye of this maistres · mowen clothen hem at lyking,
For moneye and heore marchaundie · meeten ofte to-gedere.
Seththe charite hath be chapmon · and cheef to schriuen lordes,
Mony ferlyes han bi-falle · in a fewe ȝeres.
But holychirche bi-ginne · holde bet to-gedere,
The moste mischeef on molde · mounteth vp faste.
Ther prechede a pardoner · as he a prest were,

And aryseth with ribaudrie · tho Roberdes knaues;
Slep and synful sleuthe · seweth suche euere.
Pylgrimis and palmers · plyȝhten hem to-gederes,
To seche seint Iame · and seyntys of Rome,
Wenten forth in hure way · with meny vn-wyse tales,
And hauen leue to lye · al hure lyf-time.
Eremytes on an hep · with hokede staues,
Wenten to Walsyngham · and hure wenches after;
Grete lobies and longe · that loth were to swynke,
Clothede hem in copis · to be knowe fro othere,
And made hem-selue eremytes · hure eise to haue.
Ich fond ther frerus · alle the foure ordres,
Prechynge the peple · for profit of the wombe,
And glosynge the godspel · as hem good lykede;
For couetise of copes · contrariede som doctors.
Meny of this maistres · of mendinant freres,
Hure monye and marchaundise · marchen to-gederes;
Ac sutth charite hath be chapman · and chef to shryue lordes,
Many ferlies han fallen · in a fewe ȝeres;
Bote holy churche and charite · choppe a-doun swich shryuers,
The moste myschif on molde · mounteth vp faste.
Ther preched a pardoner · as he a prest were,

---

mychief L. C. 45. wit P. 48. siche P. 49. wit P. tales MF; tale PE. 53. that M; and P. 55. hem-silue P. 65. on IFS; of P.

And brouȝt vp a bulle · with bisschopes seles,
And seide that him-self mihte · a-soylen hem alle
Of falsnesse and fastinge · and of vouwes I-broken.
The lewede men likede him wel · and leeueth his speche,
And comen vp knelynge · and cusseden his bulle;
He bonchede hem with his breuet · and blered heore eiȝen,
And rauhte with his ragemon · ringes and broches.
Thus ȝe ȝiueth oure gold · glotonye to helpen,
And leueth hit to losels · that lecherie haunten.
Weore the bisschop i-blesset · and worth bothe his eres,

Brouȝte forth a bulle · with bishopes seles,
And seide that hym-self myȝte · assoilen hem alle
Of falshed of fastyng · of vowes ybroken.
Lewed men leued hym wel · and lyked his wordes,
Comen vp knelyng · to kissen his bulles;
He bonched hem with his breuet · and blered here eyes,
And rauȝte with his ragman · rynges and broches.
Thus they geuen here golde · glotones to kepe,
And leueth such loseles · that lecherye haunten.
Were the bischop yblissed · and worth bothe his eres,
His seel shulde nouȝt be sent · to deceyue the peple.
Ac it is nauȝt by the bischop · that the boy precheth,
For the parisch prest and the pardonere · parten the siluer,
That the poraille of the parisch · sholde haue ȝif thei nere.
Persones and parisch prestes · pleyned hem to the bischop,
That here parisshes were pore · sith the pestilence tyme,
To haue a lycence and a leue · at London to dwelle,
And syngen there for symonye · for siluer is swete.
Bischopes and bachelers · bothe maistres and doctours,
That han cure vnder criste · and crounyng in tokne
And signe that thei sholden · shryuen here paroschienes,
Prechen and prey for hem · and the pore fede,
Liggen in London · in lenten, an elles.
Somme seruen the kyng · and his siluer tellen,
In cheker and in chancerye · chalengen his dettes
Of wardes and wardmotes · weyues and streyues.

A. 81. tyme THUD; V *om.* C. 67. broute P. 68. myȝthe P. 72. breuet IM; bulles P. eyen FMS; eye P. 73. an (*for* and) P.

Heo scholde not beo so hardi · to deceyue so the peple.
Saue hit nis not bi the bisschop · that the boye precheth;
Bote the parisch prest and he · de-parte the seluer,
That haue schulde the pore parisschens · ȝif that heo ne weore.
Persones and parisch prestes · playneth to heore bisschops,
That heore parisch hath ben pore · seththe the pestilence tyme,
And asketh leue and lycence · at Londun to dwelle,
To singe ther for simonye · for seluer is swete.

[*Compare* A. PROL. 90–95, p. 18.]

And brouȝte forth a bulle · with bisshopis seles,
And seide that hym-selue · myȝte asoilie hem alle
Of falsnesse of fastinges · of vowes to-broke.
Lewede men lyuede hym wel · and likeden hus wordes,
Comen and kneleden · to kyssen his bulles;
He blessede hem with hus breuet · and blerede hure eyen,
And raghte with hus rageman · rynges and broches.
Thus ȝe ȝeueth ȝoure golde · glotones to helpe,
And leneth it to loreles · that lecherie haunten.
Were the bisshop blessid · other worth bothe hus eren,
Hus sele sholde noȝt be sent · in deceit of the puple.
Ac it ys noȝt by the bysshop · that the boye precheth,
The parsheprest and the pardoner · parten the seluer,
That poore puple in parshes · sholde haue, yf thei ne were.
Persones and parsheprestes · pleynede to the bisshop,
That hure parshens ben poore · sitthe the pestelence tyme,
To haue licence and leue · in Londone to dwelle,
And synge ther for symonye · for seluer ys swete.
Bisshopes and bachilers · bothe maisters and doctors,
That han cure vnder cryst · and crownynge in tokne,
Ben chargid with holy churche · charyte to tulie,
That is, leel loue and lif · a-mong lered and lewed;
Thei lyen in Londone · in lentene, and elles.
Somme seruen the kynge · and hus seluer tellen,
In the chekkere and the chauncelrie · chalengynge hus dettes,
Of wardes and of wardemotes · wayues and strayues.

---

82. parshen P. 84. for IMF; the wyle P. 87. wit P. 89. lyen FS; leyen P.

[*Not in* **A**-*text*.]

And some seruen as seruantz · lordes and ladyes,
And in stede of stuwardes · sytten and demen. 96

[*Compare* **B**. x. 280–283.]

Here messe and here matynes · and many of here oures
Arn don vndeuoutlych; · drede is at the laste
Lest crist in consistorie · acorse ful manye.
I parceyued of the power · that Peter had to kepe, 100
To bynde and to vnbynde · as the boke telleth,
How he it left with loue · as owre lorde hight,

B. 99. consistorie WCO; constorie L. **C**. 95. herde hit P. 97. broght I; y-set P. bounden P. 98. tol IMFS; tool P. 99. ther hangeth MFI; hongeth there P. 100. wordle P. 104. world MF; wolde P. wryt IS; wryȝt P. 105. the IMFS; P *om*. 109. fore P. 118. For-thi FS; For thei P. 121. on SM; in P. *So in* l. 123. 130. hit lefte MF; lofte P.

[*Not in* **A**-*text*.]

Somme aren as seneschals · and seruen othere lordes,
And ben in stede of stywardes · and sitten and demen.
Concience cam and acusede hem · and the comune hit herde,
And seide, 'ydolatrie ȝe soffren · in sondrye places menye,
And boxes ben broght forth · i-bounden with yre,
To vnder-take the tol · of vntrewe sacrifice.
In menynge of miracles · muche wex ther hangeth;
Al the world wot wel · hit myȝte nat be trywe:
Ac for it profitith ȝow to porswarde · ȝe prelates soffren
That lewede men in mysbylyue · leuen and deien.
Ich lyue wel, by oure lorde · for loue of ȝoure couetyse,
That al the world be the wors; · as holy wryt telleth
What cheste, and meschaunce · to the children of Israel,
Ful on hem that free were · thorwe two false preestes.
For the synne of Ophni · and of Finéés hus brother,
Thei were disconfit in bataille · and losten *Archa dei;*
And, for hure syre sauh hem syngen · and soffrede hem don ille,
And noȝt chased hem ther-of · and wolde noȝt rebukie hem,
A-non, as it was ytold hym · that the children of Israel
Weren disconfit in bataille · and *Archa dei* yloꝛc,
And hus sones slayen · anon he ful for sorwe
Fro hus chaire thare he sat · and brak hus necke a-tweyne.
And al was for veniaunce · that he but noȝt hus children;
And for they were preestes · and men of holychurche,
God was wel the wrother · and tok the rathere veniaunce.
For-thi ich seȝe, ȝe preestes · and men of holychurche,
That soffren men do sacrifice · and worshepen maumettes,
And ȝe sholde be here fadres · and techen hem betere,
God shal take veniaunce · on alle swiche preestes
Wel harder and grettere · on suche shrewede faderes,
Than euere he dude on Ophni · and Finees, or on here fader,
For ȝoure shrewede suffraunce · and ȝoure owene synne.
ȝoure masse and ȝoure matynes · and meny of ȝoure houres
Aren don vndeuotlich · drede ys at the laste
Leste crist in hus constorie · of ȝow a-corse menye.
Ich parceuede of the power · that peter hadde to kepe,
To bynden and vnbynden · as the boke telleth,
How he hit lefte with loue · as oure lorde wolde,

[*Not in* A-*text.*]

Amonges foure vertues · the best of alle vertues,
That cardinales ben called · and closyng ȝatis,
There crist is in kyngdome · to close and to shutte,
And to opne it to hem · and heuene blisse shewe.
Ac of the cardinales atte Courte · that cauȝt of that name,
And power presumed in hem · a pope to make,
To han that power that Peter hadde · inpugnen I nelle;
For in loue and letterure · the electioun bilongeth,
For-thi I can and can nauȝte · of courte speke more.
Thanne come there a kyng · knyȝthod hym ladde,
Miȝt of the comunes · made hym to regne,
And thanne cam kynde wytte · and clerkes he made,
For to conseille the kyng · and the comune saue.
The kyng and knyȝthode · and clergye bothe
Casten that the comune · shulde hem-self fynde.
The comune contreued · of kynde witte craftes,
And for profit of alle the poeple · plowmen ordeygned,
To tilie and trauaile · as trewe lyf asketh.
The kynge and the comune · and kynde witte the thridde
Shope lawe and lewte · eche man to knowe his owne.
Thanne loked vp a lunatik · a lene thing with-alle,
And knelyng to the kyng · clergealy he seyde;
'Crist kepe the, sire kyng · and thi kyngriche,
And leue the lede thi londe · so leute the louye,
And for thi riȝtful rewlyng · be rewarded in heuene!'
And sithen in the eyre an hiegh · an angel of heuene
Lowed to speke in latyn— · for lewed men ne coude
Iangle ne iugge · that iustifie hem shulde,
But suffren and seruen— · for-thi seyde the angel,
'*Sum Rex, sum Princeps · neutrum fortasse deinceps;—*
O qui iura regis · Christi specialia regis,
Hoc quod agas melius · iustus es, esto pius!
Nudum ius a te · vestiri vult pietate;
Qualia vis metere · talia grana sere.
Si ius nudatur · nudo de iure metatur.
Si seritur pietas · de pietate metas!'

C. 134. cauȝt MFI; chaut P. 135. An (*for* And) P. 138. quaht P.
140. muche MF; meche P. 141. kynde; *miswritten* a kynde P.

[*Not in* A-*text.*]

Amonges foure vertues · most vertuose of vertues,
That cardinales ben callid · and closynde ȝates,
Ther crist is in kyngdome · to closye with heuene.
Ac of the cardinales at court · that cauȝt han such a name,
And power presumen in hem-self · a pope to make,
To haue the power that Peter hadde · repugnen ich nelle;
For in loue and in letterure · lith the grete eleccion;
Countrepleide it noȝt,' quath Conscience · 'for holy churches sake.'

Thanne cam ther a kyng · knyȝt-hod hym ladde,
The muche myȝte of the men · made hym to regne;
And thanne cam kynde witte · and clerkus he made,
And conscience and kynde wit · and knyȝt-hod to-gederes
Caste that the comune · sholde hure comunes fynde.
Kyndewit and the comune · contreuede alle craftes,
And for most profit to the puple · a plouh thei gonne make,
With leel labour to lyue · whyl lif and londe lasteth.
Than kynde wit to the kyng · and to the comune seide,

'Crist kep the, sire kyng · and thy kynryche,
And leue the lede so thy londe · that leaute the louye,
And for thy ryȝtful ruelyng · be rewardid in heuene.'

Conscience to cleregie · and to the kyng saide,
'*Sum rex, sum princeps · neutrum fortasse deinceps;*
O qui iura regis · christi specialia regis,
Hoc vt agas melius · iustus, et esto pius!
Nudum ius a te · vestiri vult pietate,
Qualia vis metere · talia grana sere;
Si seritur pietas · de pietate metas.'

145. profit FME; profytable P. 146. Wit P. wyl (*for* whyl) P. lif MFS; lyue P. 148. sire MI; P *om.* 149. leue ISMFE; lyue P. 152. *neutrum* ISMFE; miswritten *venturum* P.

[*Not in* **A**-*text.*]

Thanne greued hym a goliardeys · a glotoun of wordes,
And to the angel an heiȝ · answered after,
'*Dum rex a regere · dicatur nomen habere,*
Nomen habet sine re · nisi studet iura tenere.'
And thanne gan alle the comune · crye in vers of latin,
To the kynges conseille · construe ho-so wolde—
'*Precepta Regis · sunt nobis vincula legis.*'
With that ran there a route · of ratones at ones,
And smale mys myd hem · mo then a thousande,
And comen to a conseille · for here comune profit;
For a cat of a courte · cam whan hym lyked,
And ouerlepe hem lyȝtlich · and lauȝte hem at his wille,
And pleyde with hem perilouslych · and possed hem aboute.
'For doute of dyuerse dredes · we dar nouȝte wel loke;
And ȝif we grucche of his gamen · he wil greue vs alle,
Cracche vs, or clowe vs · and in his cloches holde,
That vs lotheth the lyf · or he lete vs passe.
Myȝte we with any witte · his wille withstonde,
We myȝte be lordes aloft · and lyuen at owre ese.'
A raton of renon · most renable of tonge,
Seide for a souereygne · help to hym-selue;—
'I haue ysein segges,' quod he · 'in the cite of London
Beren biȝes ful briȝte · abouten here nekkes,
And some colers of crafty werk; · vncoupled thei wenden
Bothe in wareine and in waste · where hem leue lyketh;
And otherwhile thei aren elles-where · as I here telle.
Were there a belle on here beiȝ · bi Iesu,, as me thynketh,
Men myȝte wite where thei went · and awei renne!
And riȝt so,' quod that ratoun · 'reson me sheweth,
To bugge a belle of brasse · or of briȝte syluer,
And knitten on a colere · for owre comune profit,
And hangen it vp-on the cattes hals · thanne here we mowen
Where he ritt or rest · or renneth to playe.
And ȝif him list for to laike · thenne loke we mowen,

B. 140. answered CWQ; answeres LR. 147. myd W; with L. 151. (*2nd*) hem COR; LW *om.* **C.** 159. Wer P. 160. atte GES; at the MF; atte the P. 162. loue—lord SMFGI; oure lordes loue P. lyppes MFGI; lyppe P. 168. whan SMFE; wanne P. 169. lyȝtlyiche P. 174. wit

[*Compare* A. PROL. 84–89; B. PROL. 210–215; p. 18.]

Conscience and the kyng · in-to the court wenten,
Where houede an hondred · in houes of silke,
Seriauntes hij semede · that seruen atte barre,
To plede for penyes · and poundes the lawe,
And nat for loue of oure lord · vnlose hure lyppes ones.
Thow myȝt bet mete the myst · on Maluerne hulles,
Than gete a mom of hure mouth · til moneye be hem shewid.
Thanne ran ther a route · of ratones, as it were,
And smale mys with hem · mo than a thousand,
Come to on counsail · for hure comune profit;
For a cat of a court · cam whan hym lykyde,
And ouer-leep hem lyȝtlyche · and lauhte hem at wille,
And pleide with hem periloslich · and putte hem ther hym lykyde:—
'And if we grucche of hys game · he wol greue ous sarrer,
To hus clees clawen ows · and in hys cloches holde,
That ous lotheth the lyf · er he lete ows passe.
Myȝte we with eny wyt · hus wil with-sette,
We myȝte be lordes aloft · and lyue as vs luste.'
Tho saide a raton of renoun · most resonable of tonge,

'Ich haue yseie grete syres · in cytees and in tounes
Bere byȝes of bryȝt gold · al aboute hure neckes,
And colers of crafty werke · bothe knyȝtes and squiers.

Were ther a belle on hure byȝe · by Iesus, as me thynketh,
Men myȝte wite wher thei wenten · and hure wey roume.
Ryȝt so,' quath the raton · 'reison me shewith,
A belle to byggen of bras · other of bryȝt seluer,
And knytte it on a coler · for oure comune profit,
And honge aboute the cattys hals · thanne hure we mowe
Wher he ryt other rest · other romyth to pleye.
And yf hym luste for to layke · thanne loke we mowe,

(*for* with) P. to with-sette PEFS; *but* MG *omit* to. 175. luste MF; lusten PES. 180. as SMFG; PE *om.* 181. wher M; wer PS. 186. Wher SGE; Wheþer MF; Wer P.

[*Not in* **A**-*text.*]

And peren in his presence · ther while hym plaie liketh,
And ȝif him wrattheth, be ywar · and his weye shonye.'
Alle this route of ratones · to this reson thei assented.
Ac tho the belle was youȝt · and on the beiȝe hanged,
There ne was ratoun in alle the route · for alle the rewme of Fraunce,
That dorst haue ybounden the belle · aboute the cattis nȍkke,
Ne hangen it aboute the cattes hals · al Engelonde to wynne;
And helden hem vnhardy · and here conseille feble,
And leten here laboure lost · and alle here longe studye.
A mous that moche good · couthe, as me thouȝte,
Stroke forth sternly · and stode biforn hem alle,
And to the route of ratones · reherced these wordes;
'Thouȝ we culled the catte · ȝut sholde ther come another,
To cracchy vs and al owre kynde · thouȝ we crope vnder benches.
For-thi I conseille alle the comune · to lat the catte worthe,
And be we neuer so bolde · the belle hym to shewe;
For I herde my sire seyn · is seuene ȝere ypassed,
There the catte is a kitoun · the courte is ful elyng;
That witnisseth holiwrite · who-so wil it rede,
Ve terre vbi puer rex est, &c.
For may no renke there rest haue · for ratones bi nyȝte;
The while he caccheth conynges · he coueite.h nouȝt owre caroyne,
But fet hym al with venesoun · defame we hym neuere.
For better is a litel losse · than a longe sorwe,
The mase amonge vs alle · thouȝ we mysse a schrewe.
For many mannus malt · we mys wolde destruye,
And also ȝe route of ratones · rende mennes clothes,
Nere that cat of that courte · that can ȝow ouerlepe;
For had ȝe rattes ȝowre wille · ȝe couthe nouȝt reule ȝowre-selue.
I sey for me,' quod the mous · 'I se so mykel after,
Shal neuer the cat ne the kitoun · bi my conseille be greued,
Ne carpyng of this coler · that costed me neure.
And thouȝ it had coste me catel · biknowen it I nolde,
But suffre as hym-self wolde · to do as hym liketh,
Coupled and vncoupled · to cacche what thei mowe.
For-thi vche a wise wiȝte I warne · wite wel his owne.'—

B. 179. it WCRO; **L** *om.* 186. crope R; cropen WR; croupe **L.**

[*Not in* **A**-*text.*]

And appere in hus presence · whyle hym pleye lyketh,
And yf he wratthe, we mowe be war · and hus way roume.'
Al the route of ratons · to thys reison a-sentede,
Ac tho the belle was ybou3t · and on the by3e honged,
Ther was no raton of al the route · for al the reame of Fraunce,
That durste haue bounde the belle · a-boute the cattes necke,
Ne haue it hongid a-boute hus hals · al Engelond to wynne;
And leten hure labour ylost · and al hure longe trauail.
A mous that muche good couthe · as me tho thou3te,
Strok forth sturneliche · and stod by-for hem alle,
And to the route of ratones · rehercede thuse wordes,
'Thauh we hadde ycullid the catte · 3ut sholde ther come another,
To cracchen ous and al oure kynde · thouh we crepe vnder benches.
For-thi ich consaile, for comune profit · lete the cat worthe,
And neuere be we so bold · the belle hym to shewe.
For ich hurde my syre sayn · seuen 3er passed,
"Ther the cat nys bote a kyton · the court is ful elynge;"
Witnesse of holy wryt · who so can rede—
Ue terre ubi puer est rex: Salamon.

Ich sigge it for me,' quath the mous · 'ich seo so muchel after,
Shal neuere the cat ne the kyton · by my consail, be greued,
Ne carpen of hure colers · that costide me neuere;
And thauh it costned me catel · by-knowe ich ne wolde,
Bote soffren and sigge nouht · and so is the beste,
Tyl myschief amende hem · that meny men chasteth.
For meny mannys malt · we mys wolde distrye,
And 3e, route of ratons · of rest men a-wake,
Ne were the cat of the court · and 3onge kytones to-warde;
For hadde 3e ratones 3oure reed · 3e couthe nat ruelie 3ow-selue.'

C. 188. whyle SE; wil P. 190. þe ratons PS; *but* MFGE *omit* þe. 191. ybou3th P. on SMFG; P *om.* 193. þat durste MFS; þa þerste P. 194. engelonnd P. 196. þouthe P. 200. chracchen P. 201. For-þi F; For-þy SG; For þei P. 207. greuede P. 211. amenden P. hem SMFE; hym P. 212. For SMFG; And PE. mys MFG; myes P.

Ther houeth an hundret · in houues of selk,
Seriauns hit semeth · to seruen atte barre;
Pleden for pons · and poundes the lawe,
Not for loue of vr lord · vn-loseth heore lippes ones.
Thow mihtest beter meten the myst · on Maluerne hulles,
Then geten a mom of heore mouth · til moneye weore schewed.
I sauh ther bisschops bolde · and bachilers of diuyn
Bi-coome clerkes of a-counte · the kyng for to seruen;
Erchedekenes and deknes · that dignite hauen,
To preche the peple · and pore men to feede,
Beon lopen to londun · bi leue of heore bisschopes,
To ben clerkes of the kynges benche · the cuntre to schende.
Barouns and burgeis · and bonde-men also

What this meteles bemeneth · ȝe men that be merye,
Deuine ȝe, for I ne dar · bi dere god in heuene!
ȝit houed there an hondreth · in houues of selke,
Seriauntȝ it semed · that serueden atte barre,
Plededen for penyes · and poundes the lawe,
And nouȝt for loue of owre lorde · vnlese here lippes onis.
Thow myȝtest better mete the myśte · on Maluerne hulles,
Than gete a momme of here mouthe · but money were shewed.

[*Compare* B. PROL. 87–94; p. 8.]

Barones an burgeis · and bonde-men als
I seiȝ in this assemble · as ȝe shul here after.
Baxsteres and brewesteres · and bocheres manye,
Wollewebsteres · and weueres of lynnen,
Taillours and tynkeres · and tolleres in marketes,
Masons and mynours · and many other craftes.
Of alkin libbyng laboreres · lopen forth somme,
As dykers and delueres · that doth here dedes ille,
And dryuen forth the longe day · with '*Dieu vous saue, Dame Emme!*'
Cokes and here knaues · crieden, 'hote pies, hote!
Gode gris and gees · gowe dyne, gowe!'
Tauerners vn-til hem · tolde the same,
'White wyn of Oseye · and red wyn of Gascoigne,
Of the Ryne and of the Rochel · the roste to defye.'—
Al this seiȝ I slepyng · and seuene sythes more.

I sauȝ in that semble · as ȝe schul heren her-aftur.
Bakers, bochers · and breusters monye,
Wollene websteris · and weueris of lynen,
Taillours, tanneris · & tokkeris bothe,
Masons, minours · and mony other craftes,
Dykers, and deluers · that don heore dedes ille,
And driueth forth the longe day · with 'deu vous saue, dam Emme!'
Cookes and heore knaues · cryen 'hote pies, hote!
Goode gees and grys · gowe dyne, gowe!'
Tauerners to hem · tolde the same tale
With good wyn of Gaskoyne · and wyn of Oseye,
Of Ruyn and of Rochel · the rost to defye.
Al this I sauȝ slepynge · & seue sithes more.

What this metals by-meneth · ȝe men that buth murye,
Diuine ȝe, for ich ne dar · by dere god almyȝty!

[*Compare* C. I. 159–164; p. 15.]
[*Compare* C. I. 85–92; p. 9.]

ȝut mette me more · of mene and of ryche,
As barouns and burgeis · and bonde-men of throupes,
Al ich sauh slepyng · as ȝe shullen hure after;
Bothe bakers and brywers · bouchers and othere,
Webbesters and walkers · and wynners with handen,
As taylours and tanners · and tyliers of erthe,
As dikers and deluers · that don here dedes ille,
And dryueth forth hure daies · with '*deux saue dame Emme!*'
Kokes and here knaues · crieden 'hote pyes, hote!
Good goos and grys · go we dyne, gowe!'
Tauerners 'a tast for nouht' · tolden the same,
'Whit wyn of Oseye · and of Gascoyne,
Of the Ruele and of the Rochel wyn · the roste to defye.'
Al this ich sauh slepynge · and seuene sythes more.

Explicit passus primus.

A. 99, 100. *These two lines are from* TUD; V *omits* them. 105. gouwe V (*2nd time*). 108. ad (*for* and) V. 109. *This line is from* TUD; V *omits it.* **B.** 215. monoy L. 224. longe WCO; dere L. 226. and WRO; a L. **C.** 216. Wat P. but (*for* buth) P. 218. mete P. 222. an (*for 2nd* and) P.

PASSUS I.

Primus passus de visione.

WHAT this mountein be-meneth · and this derke dale,
And this feire feld, ful of folk · feire I schal ow schewe.
A louely ladi on leor · in linnene i-clothed,
Com a-doun from the clyf · and clepte me feire,
And seide, 'sone! slepest thou? · Sixt thou this peple
Al hou bisy thei ben · a-boute the mase?
The moste parti of the peple · that passeth nou on eorthe,

PASSUS I.

Passus Primus de visione.

WHAT this montaigne bymeneth · and the merke dale,
And the felde ful of folke · I shal ȝow faire schewe.
A loueli ladi of lere · in lynnen yclothed,
Come down fram a castel · and called me faire,
And seide, 'Sone, slepestow · sestow this poeple,
How bisi thei ben · abouten the mase?
The moste partie of this poeple · that passeth on this erthe,
Haue thei worschip in this worlde · thei wilne no better;
Of other heuene than here · holde thei no tale.'
I was aferd of her face · theiȝ she faire were,
And seide, 'mercy, Madame · what is this to mene?'
'The toure vp the toft,' quod she · 'Treuthe is there-inne,
And wolde that ȝe wrouȝte · as his worde techeth;
For he is fader of feith · fourmed ȝow alle,
Bothe with fel and with face · and ȝaf ȝow fyue wittis
Forto worschip hym ther-with · the while that ȝe ben here.
And therfore he hyȝte the erthe · to help ȝow vchone
Of wollen, of lynnen · of lyflode at nede,
In mesurable manere · to make ȝow at ese;

A. 4. clyf UDH$_2$; loft VH; T kith. 9. holde TUD; ȝeueth V; ȝyue H.

Hauen heo worschupe in this world · kepe thei no betere;
Of other heuene then heer · holde thei no tale.'
Ich was a-ferd of hire face · thauh heo feir weore,
And seide, 'merci, ma dame · what is this to mene?'
'This tour and this toft,' quod heo · 'Treuthe is ther-inne,
And wolde that ȝe wrouȝten · as his word techeth;
For he is fader of fei · that formed ow alle
Bothe with fel and with face · and ȝaf ow fyue wittes,
Forte worschupen him therwith · while ȝe beoth heere.
And for he hihte the eorthe · to seruen ow vchone
Of wollene, of linnene · to lyflode at neode,
In mesurable maner · to maken ow at ese;

PASSUS II.

Incipit passus secundus.

WHAT the montayne by-meneth · and the merke dale,
And the feld ful of folke · ich shal ȝow fayre shewe.
A loueliche lady of lere · in lynnen y-clothid,
Cam doun fro that castel · and calde me by name,
And seide, 'Wille, slepest thow · syxt thow this puple,
How busy thai ben · a-boute the mase?
The most partie of the puple · that passeth on this erthe,
Haue thei worship in this worlde · thei willen no betere;
Of other heuene than here · thei holden no tale.'
Ich was aferd of hure face · thauh hue faire were,
And saide, 'mercy, ma dame · what may thys be to mene?'
'The tour vp-on toft,' quath hue · 'Treuthe ys ther-ynne,
And wolde that ȝe wrouhte · as hus word techeth.
For he is fader of faith · and formour of alle;
To be faith-ful to hym · he ȝaue ȝow fyue wittes
For to worshepen hym ther-with · while ȝe lyuen here.
Wherfore he het the elementes · to helpe ȝow alle tymes,
And brynge forth ȝoure bylyue · bothe lynnen and wollen,
And in mesure, thouh hit muche were · to make ȝow at ese.

16. therwith THU; V *om.* C. 8. Haue IFEG; Haued P. 11. wat P. 16. wile P. 17. Werfore P. elemens P.

And comaundet of his cortesye · in comune threo thinges;
Heore nomes beth neodful · and nempnen hem I thenke,
Bi rule and bi resun · rehersen hem her-aftur.
That on clothing is · from chele ow to saue:
And that othur mete at meel · for meseise of thiseluen:
And drink whon thou druiȝest · but do hit not out of resun,
That thou worthe the worse · whon thou worche scholdest.
For Lot in his lyf-dayes · for lyking of drinke,
Dude bi his douhtren · that the deuel louede,
Dilytede him in drinke · as the deuel wolde,

And comaunded of his curteisye · in comune three thinges;
Arne none nedful but tho · and nempne hem I thinke,
And rekne hem bi resoun · reherce thow hem after.
That one is vesture · from chele the to saue,
And mete atte mele · for myseise of thi-selue,
And drynke whan thow dryest · ac do nouȝt out of resoun;
That thow worth the werse · whan thow worche shuldest.
For Loth in his lifdayes · for likyng of drynke,
Dede bi his douȝtres · that the deuel lyked;
Delited hym in drynke · as the deuel wolde,
And lecherye hym lauȝt · and lay bi hem bothe;
And al he witt it wyn · that wikked dede.
Inebriamus eum vino, dormiamusque cum eo,
Vt seruare possimus de patre nostro semen.
Thorw wyn and thorw women · there was Loth acombred,
And there gat in glotonye · gerlis that were cherlis.
For-thi drede delitable drynke · and thow shalt do the bettere;
Mesure is medcyne · thouȝ thow moche ȝerne.
It is nauȝt al gode to the goste · that the gutte axeth,
Ne liflode to thi likam · that leef is to thi soule.
Leue not thi likam · for a lyer him techeth,
That is the wrecched worlde · wolde the bitraye.
For the fende and thi flesch · folweth the to-gidere,
This and that sueth thi soule · and seith it in thin herte;
And for thow sholdest ben ywar · I wisse the the beste.'

A. 26. weore V; worthe THD. 33. ȝeore V; ȝerne THD. **B.** 37, 38. LWC *wrongly omit from* that leef *to* likam; RO *supply the words.* 41. sueth R; seest L; seeth WO; sees C. **C.** 22. wer P. 23. Ther P.

And lecherie him lauhte · and lay bi hem bothe;
And al he witede hit wyn · that wikkede dede.
Dreede dilitable drinke · and thou schalt do the bettre;
Mesure is medicine · thauh thou muche ȝeorne.
Al nis not good to the gost · that the bodi lyketh,
Ne lyflode to the licam · that leof is to the soule.
Leef not thi licam · for lyȝere him techeth,
That is the wikkede word · the to bi-traye.
For the fend and thi flesch · folewen to-gedere,
And schendeth thi soule · seo hit in thin herte;
And for thou scholdest beo war · I wisse the the bettre.'

He comaundid of his cortesye · in comune thre thynges,
Aren non nudful bote tho thre · nempnen hem ich thenke,
And rekene hem by rewe · reherce hem wher the lyketh.
The ferst of tho ys fode · and vesture the secounde,
And drynke that do the good · ac drynk nat oute of tyme.
Lo! Loth in hus lyue · thorw lecherouse drynke
Wikkydlich wroghte · and wratthede god al-myghty.
In hus dronkenesse a day · hus douhtres he dighte,
And lay by hem bothe · as the bok telleth.
In hus glotenie he by-gat · gerles that weren churles,
And al he wited the wyne · hus wikked dede.
Inebriamus eum uino et dormiamus cum eo, ut seruare possimus de patre nostro semen . Genesis.
Thorgh wyn and thorw wommen · ther was Loth encombred;
For-thy dred dilitable drynke · bothe day and nyȝtes.
Mesure is medecyne · thauh thou muche wylne.
Al is noȝt good to the gost · that the gut asketh,
Ne liflode to the licame · that leof is to the saule;
Leue noȝt thy licame · for a lyere hym techeth,
That is the wrecchede worlde · that wolde the bygyle;
For the fend and thy flesch · folwen to-gederes,
And that seeth the saule · and seith hit the in herte,
And wisseth the to be ware · and what wolde the deceyuye.'

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25. drenke P. 27. dronkenesse MI; dronknesse P. 29. he MFS; P *om.* gerles I; gurles MG; P *om.* wereren (*for* weren) P. 33. is a P; *the rest om.* a. 34. gout P. 36. Leue FE; Leef IS; Lyef P. 39. seeþ EB; seþ S; seyþ PG. seith F; seiþ EB; seyþ SG; saith I; setth P.

'A madame, merci!' quath I · 'me liketh wel thi wordes.
Bote the moneye on this molde · that men so faste holden,
Tel me to whom that tresour appendeth?'
'Go to the gospel,' quath heo · 'that god seith himselven,
Whon the peple him a-posede · with a peny in the temple,
ȝif heo schulden worschupe ther-with · Cesar heore kyng.
And he asked of hem · of whom spac the lettre,
And whom the ymage was lyk · that ther-inne stod.
"Ceesar," thei seiden · "we seoth wel vchone."
Reddite ergo que sunt cesaris cesari, et que sunt dei deo.
"Thenne *Reddite*," quath God · "that to Cesar falleth,
Et que sunt dei deo · or elles do ȝe ille."

'Madame, mercy,' quod I · 'me liketh wel ȝowre wordes,
Ac the moneye of this molde · that men so faste holdeth,
Telle me to whom, Madame · that tresore appendeth?'
'Go to the gospel,' quod she · 'that god seide hym-seluen,
Tho the poeple hym apposed · with a peny in the tempie,
Whether thei shulde ther-with · worschip the kyng Sesar.
And god axed of hem · of whome spake the lettre,
And the ymage ilyke · that there-inne stondeth?
"Cesaris," thei seide · "we sen hym wel vchone."
"*Reddite Cesari*," quod god · "that *Cesari* bifalleth,
Et que sunt dei, deo · or elles ȝe done ille."
For riȝtful reson · shulde rewle ȝow alle,
And kynde witte be wardeyne · ȝowre welthe to kepe,
And tutour of ȝoure tresore · and take it ȝow at nede;
For housbonderye and hij · holden togideres.'
Thanne I frained hir faire · for hym that hir made,
'That dongeoun in the dale · that dredful is of siȝte,
What may it be to mene · ma-dame, I ȝow biseche?'
'That is the castel of care · who-so cometh therinne
May banne that he borne was · to body or to soule.
Therinne wonieth a wiȝte · that wronge is yhote,
Fader of falshed · and founded it hym-selue.
Adam and Eue · he egged to ille,
Conseilled Caym · to kullen his brother;

A. 49. *Latin quotation from* H. 54. ȝow TH_2; ȝou HD; V *om.* 57. doun V; dungeon TH_2D; *see* prol. 15. 62. it T; yt D; VH *om.*

For rihtfoliche resoun · schulde rulen ou alle,
And kuynde wit be wardeyn · oure weolthe to kepe,
And tour of vr tresour · to take hit ȝow at nede;
For husbondrie and he · holden to-gedere.'
Thenne I fraynede hire feire · for him that hire made,
'That dungun in that deope dale · that dredful is of siht,
What may hit mene, madame · ich the bi-seche?'
'That is the castel of care,' quod heo · 'hose cometh ther-inne,
Mai banne that he born was · to bodi or to soule.
Ther-inne woneth a wiht · Wrong is i-hote,
Fader of falsness · he foundede it him-seluen;
Adam and Eue · he eggede to don ille;
Counseilede Caym · to cullen his brother;

'A ma dame, mercy,' quath ich · 'me lyketh wel ȝoure wordes,
Ac the moneye of this molde · that men so faste kepeth,
Telle ȝe me now to wham · that tresour by-longeth?'
'Go to the gospel,' quath hue · 'and see what god sayde,
Whanne the puple aposed hym · of a peny in the temple,
And god askede of hem · whas was the coygne.

"Cesares," thei seiden · "sothliche we knowen."
"*Reddite Cesari*," scide God · "that to Cesar by-falleth,
Et que sunt dei, deo · other ellys ȝe don ille."
For ryhtfulliche reson · sholde ruele ȝow alle,
And kynde wit be wardeyn · ȝoure welthe to kepe,
And tutour of ȝowre tresoure · and take hit ȝow atte nede;
For hosboundrie and he · holdeth to-gederes.'
Ich fraynede hure faire tho · for hym that hure made,
'The dupe dale and durke · vn-semely to see to,
What may hit by-mene · madame, ich by-seche?'
'That is the castel of care · who-so cometh ther-ynne
May banne that he bore was · in body and in soule;
Ther-ynne wonyeth a wyȝt · that wrong is his name,
Fader of falshede · fond hit furst of alle;
Adam and Eue · he eggede to don ille,
Consailde Cayme · to cullen hus brother;

C. 45. Wanne P. 52. hit MIG; PE *om.* 61. egede P.

Iudas he iapede · with the Iewes seluer,
And on an ellerne treo · hongede him after.
He is a lettere of loue · and lyȝeth hem alle
That trusteth in heor tresour · ther no truthe is inne.'
Thenne hedde I wonder in my wit · what wommon hit weore,
That suche wyse wordes · of holy writ me sȩhewede;
And halsede hire in the heiȝe nome · er heo theonne ȝeode,
What heo weore witerly · that wissede me so feire.
'Holi churche icham,' quath heo · 'thou ouhtest me to knowe:
Ich the vndurfong furst · and thi feith the tauȝte.
Thow brouȝtest me borwes · my biddyng to worche,
And to loue me leelly · while thi lyf durede.'

Iudas he iaped · with Iuwen siluer,
And sithen on an eller · honged hym after.
He is letter of loue · and lyeth hem alle,
That trusten on his tresor · bitrayeth he sonnest.'
Thanne had I wonder in my witt · what womman it were
That such wise wordes · of holy writ shewed;
And asked hir on the hieȝe name · ar heo thennes ȝeode,
What she were witterli · that wissed me so faire?
'Holicherche I am,' quod she · 'thow ouȝtest me to knowe,
I vnderfonge the firste · and the feyth tauȝte,
And brouȝtest me borwes · my biddyng to fulfille,
And to loue me lelly · the while thi lyf dureth.'
Thanne I courbed on my knees · and cryed hir of grace,
And preyed hir pitousely · prey for my synnes,
And also kenne me kyndeli · on criste to bileue,
That I miȝte worchen his wille · that wrouȝte me to man;
'Teche me to no tresore · but telle me this ilke,
How I may saue my soule · that seynt art yholden?'
'Whan alle tresores aren tried,' quod she · 'trewthe is the best;
I do it on *deus caritas* · to deme the sothe;
It is as derworth a drewery · as dere god hym-seluen.
Who-so is trewe of his tonge · and telleth none other,
And doth the werkis ther-with · and wilneth no man ille,

A. 72. wisside TH_2; wysed D; techeth V. **B.** 81. kenne WCRO kende L. **C.** 64. An (*for* And) P. 65. ys a P; MIFGSB *om.* a. 67. his (*for* is) P. 69. wryȝt P. 70. halsede MIFB; hanslede P. 71. witterly

Thenne knelede I on my kneos · and crized hire of grace,
And preiede hire pitously · to preye for vr sunnes,
And eke to teche me kuyndely · on crist to bi-leeue,
That Ich his wille mihte worche · that wrouhte me to mon.
'Tech me to no tresour · bote tel me this ilke,
Hou I may saue my soule · that seint art I-holde.'
'Whon alle tresour is I-trized · treuthe is the beste;
I do hit on *Deus Caritas* · to deeme the sothe.
Hit is as derworthe a drurie · as deore god him-seluen.
For hose is trewe of his tonge · telleth not elles,
Doth his werkes ther-with · and doth no mon ille,

Iudas he by-iapede · thorgh Iewene seluer,
And afterward he heng hym · hye on an ellerne.
He ys lettare of loue · and lyeth alle tymes;
That tryst in erthely tresour . he by-traieth sonnest,
To en-combrye men with couetyse · that is hus kynde.
Thanne hadde ich wonder in my wit · what womman hue were,
That suche wyse wordes · of holy wryt shewede;
And halsede hure on the heie name · er hue thennys wente,
What hue were witterly · that wissede me so and tauhte.
'Holychurche ich am,' quath hue · 'thow oghtest me to knawe;
Ich vnder-feng the formest · and fre man the made.
Thow broghtest me borwes · my byddyng to fulfille,
To leue on me and louye me · al thy lyf tyme.'
Thanne knelede ich on my knees · and criede hure of grace,
And preiede hure pytously · to preie for me to amende,
Al-so to kenne me kyndelich · on crist to by-leue,
'And teche me to no tresour · bote telle me thys ilke,
How ich may sauy my saule · that seynt art yholde.'
'Whanne alle tresours ben tried,' quath hue · 'treuthe is the beste;
Ich do hit on *Deus caritas* · to deme the sothe.
Hit is as derworthe a druwery · as dere god him-selue.
For he, is trewe of hus tonge · and of hus two handes,
And doth the werkes therwith · and wilneth no man ille,

IFEG; whiterly P. 72. to MIFSE; P *om.* 75. leue MIFSE; lyue P. lyf SG; lif MFE; lyue P. 76. P *om.* and. P *om.* of. 77. pytosly P. 78. by-lyue P. 80. ert P. 81. Qwenne P. 83. hem-selue P. 84. trywe P; *but see* ll. 95, 96.

He is a-counted to the gospel · on grounde and on lofte,
And eke I-liknet to vr lord · bi seint Lucus wordes.
Clerkes that knowen hit · scholde techen hit aboute,
For Cristene and vn-cristene · him cleymeth vchone.
Kynges and knihtes · scholde kepen hem bi reson,
And rihtfuliche raymen · the realmes a-bouten,
And take trespassours · and teiȝen hem faste,
Til treuthe hedde I-termynet · the trespas to the ende.
For Dauid, in his dayes · he dubbede knihtes,
Dude hem swere on heor swerd · to serue treuthe euere.
That is the perte profession · that a-pendeth to knihtes,

He is a god bi the gospel · agrounde and aloft,
And ylike to owre lorde . bi seynte Lukes wordes.
The clerkes that knoweth this · shulde kenne it aboute,
For cristene and vncristne · clameth it vchone.
Kynges and kniȝtes · shulde kepe it bi resoun,
Riden and rappe down · in reumes aboute,
And taken *trangressores* · and tyen hem faste,
Til treuthe had ytermyned · her trespas to the ende.
And that is the professiqun appertly · that appendeth for knyȝtes,
And nouȝt to fasten a Fryday · in fyue score wynter;
But holden with him and with hir · that wolden al treuthe,
And neuer leue hem for loue · ne for lacchyng of syluer.
For Dauid in his dayes · dubbed kniȝtes,
And did hem swere on here swerde · to serue trewthe euere;
And who-so passed that poynte · was *apostata* in the ordre.
But criste kingene kynge · kniȝted ten,
Cherubyn and seraphin · suche seuene and an-othre,
And ȝaf hem myȝte in his maieste · the muryer hem thouȝte;
And ouer his mene meyne · made hem archangeles,
Tauȝte hem bi the Trinitee · treuthe to knowe,
To be buxome at his biddyng · he bad hem nouȝte elles.
Lucifer with legiounes · lerned it in heuene,

A. 94. teiȝen T; tyen H_2; teyen D; bynden V. 103. *This line, which* V *omits, is a made up one from* H *and* U. *The readings are*:—For crist kynge of knyȝtus · knytted somtyme H; And kyng, kyngene kyng · knyhtide tene U; And crist king of kinges · kniȝtide tene TH_2; and crist kyng of knyȝtes · knyȝted ten D. 106. *From* TH_2UD; V *omits this line.* 107.

And not to faste a Friday · in fyue score ȝeres,
But holden with hem and with heore · that asken the treuthe,
And leuen for no loue · ne lacching of ȝiftus;
And he that passeth that poynt · is a-postata in the ordre.
For crist, kyngene kyng · knyhtede tene,
Cherubin and Seraphin · an al the foure ordres,
And ȝaf hem maystrie and miht · in his maieste,
And ouer his meyne · made hem archaungelis,
And tauȝte hem thorw the Trinite · treuthe for to knowen,
And beo boxum at his biddynge · he bad hem not elles.
Lucifer with legiouns · lerede hit in heuene;

He is a god by the gospel · and graunty may hele,
And like oure Lorde also · by seynt Lukys wordes.
Clerkus that knowen thys · shoulde kennen hit a-boute,
For cristene and vncristene · cleymen it echone.
Kynges and knyȝtes · shoulde kepen hit by reson,
Ryden and rappe a-doune · in reames a-boute,
And take trespassours · and tyen hem faste,
Til trewthe hadde ytermenyd · here trespas to the ende;
And holde with hym and with hure · that han trewe accion,
And for no lordene loue · leue the trewe partye.
Trewely to take · and treweliche to fyȝte,
Ys the profession and the pure ordre · that apendeth to knyȝtes;
Who-so passeth that poynt · ys apostata of knyȝt-hod.
For thei shoulde nat faste · ne for-bere sherte;
Bote feithfullich defende · and fyȝte for truthe,
And neuere leue for loue · in hope to lacche seluer.
Dauid by hus daies · dobbede knyȝtes,
And dude hem swerye on here swerde · to serue truthe euere.
Whanne god by-gan heuene · in that grete blysse,
He made knyȝtes in hus court · creatures ten,
Cherubin and seraphin · suche seuene and another;
Lucifer louelokest tho · ac lytel while it durede.
He was an archangel of heuene · on of godes knyȝtes;

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hem THUD; V *om.* **B.** 107. murger L. **C.** 89. vncrestine P. 92. And I; And to PESG. 94. triwe P. 95. lordene I; lordes ME; lordayne P. 96. fyȝete P; *see* l. 100. 97. pure MFESGB; poure PI. 98. Wo-so P. aposteta P. 103. on MIFSGB; in P. 104. Wanne P. 106. P *om.* and. 107. wile P. durede MIFSB; laste P.

He was louelokest of siht · aftur vr lord,
Til he brak boxumnes · thorw bost of him-seluen.
Thene fel he with his felawes · and fendes bi-comen,
Out of heuene in-to helle · hobleden faste,
Summe in the eir, and summe in the eorthe · and summe in helle deope.
Bote Lucifer louwest · liȝth of hem alle;

But for he brake buxumnesse · his blisse gan he tyne,
And fel fro that felawship · in a fendes liknes,
In-to a depe derke helle · to dwelle there for eure;
And mo thowsandes with him · than man couthe noumbre,
Lopen out with Lucifer · in lothelich forme,
For thei leueden vpon hym · that lyed in this manere:
Ponam pedem in aquilone, et similis ero altissimo.

And alle that hoped it miȝte be so · none heuene miȝte hem holde,
But fellen out in fendes liknesse · nyne dayes togideres,
Til god of his goodnesse · gan stable and stynte,
And garte the heuene to stekye · and stonden in quiete.

Whan thise wikked went out · wonderwise thei fellen,
Somme in eyre, somme in erthe · and somme in helle depe;
Ac Lucifer lowest · lith of hem alle;
For pryde that he pult out · his peyne hath none ende;
And alle that worche with wronge · wenden hij shulle
After her deth day · and dwelle with that shrewe.
Ac tho that worche wel · as holiwritt telleth,
And enden as I ere seide · in treuthe, that is the best,
Mowe be siker that her soule · shal wende to heuene,
Ther treuthe is in Trinitee · and troneth hem alle.

C. 113. on a-lofte P. 114. þan IB; To PEMFS. 116. sotthly P.
118. leue IFSEBG; loyne P. 120. fuel (*for* ful) P. 123. meuen E;

For pruide that he put out · his peyne hath non ende;
And alle that wrong worchen · wende thei schulen
After heore deth-day · and dwellen with that schrewe.
Ac heo that worchen that word · that holi writ techeth,
And endeth as Ich er seide · in profitable werkes,
Mouwen be siker that heore soules · schullen to heuene,
Ther treuthe is in trinite · and corouneth hem alle.

He and other with hym · that hulde nou3t with treuthe,
Lopen out in lothliche forme · for hus false wille;
He hadde lust to be lyke · hus lord god almyghty.
Ponam pedem meum in aquilone, et ero similis altissimo.
Lord! why wolde he tho · thulke wrechede Lucifer,
Lepen a-lofte · in the north syde
Than sitten in the sonne side · ther the day roweth?
Ne were it for northerne men · a-non ich wolde telle;
Ac ich wolle lacke no lyf' · quath that lady sothly;
'Hit is sykerer by southe · ther the sonne regneth
Than in the north by meny notes · no man leue other.
For thider as the fend flegh · hus fote for to sette,
Ther he failede and ful · and hus felawes alle;
And helle is ther he ys · and he ther ybounde.
Euene contrarie sitteth Criste · clerkus knowen the sothe;
Dixit dominus domino meo, sede a dextris meis.
Ac of this matere no more · meuen ich nelle;
Hewes in the halyday · after hete wayten,
They care no3t thauh it be cold · knaues, when thei worchen.
In wonderwyse holy wryt · tellith how thei fullen;
Somme in erthe, somme in aier · somme in helle dupe,
Ac Lucifer lowest · lith of hem alle;
For prude that hym pokede · hus peyne hath no ende.
Alle that worchen that wikkede ys · wenden thei shulle
After hure deth-day · and dwelle ther wrong ys;
And alle that han wel y-wroght · wenden they shulle
Estwarde to heuene · euere to abyde,
Ther treuthe is, the trone · that trinite ynne sitteth.

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meue PG. 124. Hewes I; Hewen B; Hynen M; *miswritten* He was P.
heten P. 125. wen P.

For I sigge sikerli · bi siht of the textes,
Whon alle tresor is I-tri3et · treuthe is the beste.
Lereth hit this lewed men · for lettrede hit knoweth,
That treuthe is tresour · triedest on eorthe.'
'Yit haue I no kuynde knowing,' quod I · 'thou most teche me betere,
Bi what craft in my corps · hit cumseth, and where.'
'Thou dotest daffe,' quath heo · 'dulle are thi wittes.

For-thi I sey as I seide ere · bi si3te of thise textis,
Whan alle tresores arne ytried · treuthe is the beste.
Lereth it this lewde men · for lettred men it knowen,
That treuthe is tresore · the triest on erthe.'
'3et haue I no kynde knowing,' quod I · '3et mote 3e kenne me better,
By what craft in my corps · it comseth and where.'
'Thow doted daffe,' quod she · 'dulle arne thi wittes;
To litel latyn thow lernedest · lede, in thi 3outhe;
Heu michi, quod sterilem duxi vitam iuuenilem!
It is a kynde knowyng,' quod he · 'that kenneth in thine herte
For to loüye thi lorde · leuer than thi-selue;
No dedly synne to do · dey thou3 thow sholdest:
This I trowe be treuthe; · who can teche the better,
Loke thow suffre hym to sey · and sithen lere it after.
For thus witnesseth his worde · worche thow there-after;
For trewthe telleth that loue · is triacle of heuene;
May no synne be on him sene · that vseth that spise,
And alle his werkes he wrou3te · with loue as him liste;
And lered it Moises for the leuest thing · and moste like to heuene,
And also the plente of pees · moste precious of vertues.
For heuene my3te nou3te holden it · it was so heuy of hym-self,
Tyl it hadde of the erthe · yeten his fylle,
And whan it haued of this folde · flesshe and blode taken,
Was neuere leef vpon lynde · li3ter ther-after,
And portatyf and persant · as the poynt of a nedle,
That my3te non armure it lette · ne none hei3 walles.

A. 137. preche it in THH$_2$D; prechet the V. 145. worche CO; worcheth L. **B.** 139. The MSS. have *quia*, not *quod*. 150. *Read* plante.
C. 136. Than S; That PMFIE. 138. wat P. wheder I; whider B;

Hit is a kuynde knowynge · that kenneth the in herte
For to loue thi louerd · leuere then thi-seluen;
No dedly sunne to do · dyȝe thauȝ thou scholdest.
This I trouwe beo treuthe! · hose con teche the betere,
Loke thou suffre him to seye · and seththe teche hit forthure!
For thus techeth us his word · (worch thou ther-aftur)
That loue is the leuest thing · that vr lord asketh,
And eke the playnt of pees; · preche it in thin harpe

Lere it thus lewede men · for lettrede hit knoweth,
Than treuthe and trewe loue · ys no tresour bettere.'
'Ich haue no kynde knowyng,' quath ich · 'ȝe mote kenne me bettere,
By what wey hit wexith · and wheder out of my menyng.'
'Thow dotede daffe,' quath hue · 'dulle aren thy wittes,
Ich leue thow lernedist to lyte · latyn in thy ȝowthe;
Heu michi, quod sterilem · duxi uitam iuuenilem!
Hit is a kynde knowyng · that kenneth in thyn herte
For to louye thy lord · leuest of alle,
And deye rathere than to do · eny dedlich synne;
Melius est mori quam male uiuere.
And this ich trowe be treuthe · who so can teche the betere,
Loke thow soffrie hym to say · and so thow myght lerne.

For treuthe telleth that loue · ys tryacle for synne,
And most souereyne salue · for saule and for body.

Loue is the plonte of pees · and most preciouse of vertues;
For heuene holde hit ne myȝte · so heuy hit semede,
Til hit hadde on erthe · ȝoten hym-selue.
Was neuere lef vp-on lynde · lyghter ther-after,
As whanne hit hadde of the folde · flesch and blod ytake;
Tho was it portatyf and pershaunt · as the poynt of a nelde,
May non armure hit lette · nother hye walles;

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whodur S; wider M; wonder P. 139. dolle P. 140. lyue P. ȝoweþe P. 143. lauest P. 152. lygheter P. 153. wanne P. folde IB; fold M; flod PS.

Ther thou art murie at thi mete · whon me biddeth the ȝedde;
For bi kuynde knowynge in herte · comseth ther a fitte.
That falleth to the fader · that formede vs alle.
He lokede on vs with loue · and lette his sone dye
Mekeliche for vre misdedes · forte amende vs alle.
And ȝit wolde he hem no wo · that wrouȝte him that pyne,
But mekeliche with mouthe · merci he by-souȝte,
To haue pite on that peple · that pynede him to dethe.
Her thou miht seon ensaumple · in hymselfe one,

For-thi is loue leder · of the lordes folke of heuene,
And a mene, as the maire is · bitwene the kyng and the comune;

Riȝt so is loue a ledere · and the lawe shapeth,
Vpon man for his mysdedes · the merciment he taxeth.
And for to knowe it kyndely · it comseth bi myght,
And in the herte, there is the heuede · and the heiȝ welle;
For in kynde knowynge in herte · there a myȝte bigynneth.
And that falleth to the fader · that formed vs alle,
Loked on vs with loue · and lete his sone deye
Mekely for owre mysdedes · to amende vs alle;
And ȝet wolde he hem no woo · that wrouȝte hym that peyne,
But mekelich with mouthe · mercy he bisouȝte
To haue pite of that poeple · that peyned hym to deth.
Here myȝtow see ensamples · in hym-selue one,
That he was miȝtful and meke · and mercy gan graunte
To hem that hongen him an heiȝ · and his herte thirled.
For-thi I rede ȝow riche · haueth reuthe of the pouere;
Thouȝ ȝe be myȝtful to mote · beth meke in ȝowre werkes.
For the same mesures that ȝe mete · amys other elles,
ȝe shullen ben weyen ther-wyth · whan ȝe wende hennes;
Eadem mensura qua mensi fueritis, remecietur vobis.
For thouȝ ȝe be trewe of ȝowre tonge · and trewliche wynne,
And as chaste as a childe · that in cherche wepeth,

A. 139. comseth U; comsith T; cumse V. 142. misdede V; misdedis THUD. 143. wrouȝte THUD; wolde V. 146. hymselfe TUD; thi-self V. 149, 150. *These lines are from* THUD; V *has* For thi I rede the mihtful of mayn be meke of thi wordes. *The Latin quotation is in* H *only.*

Hou he was mihtful and meke · that merci gon graunte
To hem that heengen him hei3e · and his herte thurleden.
For-thi I rede the riche · haue reuthe on the pore;
Thei3 3e ben mi3ty to mote · beth meke of 3our werkis;
Eadem mensura qua mensi fueritis, remecietur uobis;
For the same mesure that 3e meten · a-mis other elles,
3e schul be weyen ther-with · whon 3e wenden hennes.
For thau3 3e ben trewe of tonge · and treweliche winne,
And eke as chast as a child · that in chirche wepeth,

For-thy is loue ledere · of oure lordes folke in heuene,
And a mene, as the meyere is · by-twyne the kyng and the comune,
Ry3t so is loue a ledere · and the lawe shapeth;
Vp man for hus mysdedes · the mercement he taxeth.
And for to knowe it kyndeliche · hit comseth by myghte,
In the herte, ther is the hefd · and the hye welle.
Of kynde knowyng in herte · ther comseth a myghte,
That falleth to the fader · that formede ous alle.
On ous he lokyde with loue . and let hus sone deye,
Meekliche for oure mysdedes · to amendy ous alle.
And 3ut wolde he hem no wo · that wroght hym al that tene,
Bote myldeliche with mouhte · mercy he by-souhte,
To haue pyte on that puple · that paynede hym to dethe.
Her my3t thow see ensample · in hym-self one,
That he was myghtful and meke · and mercy gan graunte,
To hem that henge hym hye · and hus herte therlede.
For-thy ich rede 3ow ryche · haue reuthe of the poure;
Thauh 3e be myghty to mote · beeth meke in 3oure workes;
The same mesure that 3e meteth · amys other ellys,
3e shulleth be weyen ther-with · whanne 3e wenden hennes;
Eadem mensura qua mensi fueritis, remecietur uobis.
Thauh 3e be trewe of 3oure tonge · and trewelich wynne,
And be as chast as a chyld · that nother chit ne fyghteth,

C. 157. P *om.* a. 158. shappeþ P. 163. to IFSGB; in-to P. 166. teune P. 170. meuk P. 171. hym (*for* hem) P. þorlede P. 173. meuk P. 175. wanne P. *remicietur* P. 176. trywe P. triwelich P.

Bote ȝe liuen trewely · and eke loue the pore,
And such good as god sent · treweliche parten,
ȝe naue no more merit · in masse ne in houres
Then Malkyn of hire maydenhod · that no mon desyreth.
For Iames the gentel · bond hit in his book,
That fey withouten fait · is febelore then nouȝt,
And ded as a dore-nayl · but the deede folewe.
Chastite withouten charite · (wite thou forsothe),
Is as lewed as a laumpe · that no liht is inne.
Moni chapeleyns ben chast · but charite is aweye;
Beo no men hardore then thei · whon heo beoth avaunset;
Vn-kuynde to heore kun · and to alle cristene;

But if ȝe louen lelliche · and lene the poure,
Such good as god ȝow sent · godelich parteth,
ȝe ne haue na more meryte · in masse ne in houres,
Than Malkyn of hire maydenhode · that no man desireth.
For Iames the gentil · iugged in his bokes,
That faith with-oute the faite · is riȝte no thinge worthi,
And as ded as a dore-tre · but ȝif the dedes folwe;
Fides sine operibus mortua est, &c.
For-thi chastite with-oute charite · worth cheyned in helle;
It is as lewed as a laumpe · that no liȝte is inne.
Many chapeleynes arne chaste · ac charite is awey;
Aren no men auarousere than hij · whan thei ben auaunced;
Vnkynde to her kyn · and to alle cristene,
Chewen here charite · and chiden after more.
Such chastite with-outen charite · worth cheyned in helle!
Many curatoures kepen hem · clene of here bodies,
Thei ben acombred with coueitise · thei konne nouȝt don it fram hem,
So harde hath auarice · yhasped hem togideres.
And that is no treuthe of the trinite · but treccherye of helle,
And lernyng to lewde men · the latter for to dele.
For-thi this wordes · ben wryten in the gospel,
Date et dabitur vobis · for I dele ȝow alle.
And that is the lokke of loue · and lateth oute my grace,

A. 160. V *misreads*: treuthe withouten fey. *For* treuthe, D *has* fay, *and* THU *have* feith. *For* fey, TH_2 *have* fait, *and* D *has* feet. 168. V *transposes* chastite *and* charite; *see* l. 162. 176–185. *These lines are not in* V. *Lines*

Chewen heore charite · and chiden after more!
Such chastite withouten charite · worth claymed in helle!
Curatours that schulden kepe hem · clene of heore bodies,
Thei beoth cumbred in care · and cunnen not out-crepe;
So harde heo beoth with auarice · i-haspet to-gedere.
That nis no treuthe of trinite · but tricherie of helle,
And a leornyng for lewed men · the latere forte dele.
For theos beth wordes i-writen · in the ewangelye,
Date et dabitur vobis · for I dele ow alle
3oure grace and 3oure good happe · 3oure welthe for to wynne,
And therwith knoweth me kyndely · of that I 3ou sende.
That is the lok of loue · that letith out my grace

Bote yf 3e loue leelliche · and lene the poure,
Of such good as god sent · goodliche parte,
3e haue no more meryt · in masse ne in houres,
Than Malkyn of hure maidenhod · wham no man desireth.
For Iamys the gentel · iuggeth in hus bokes,
That feith with-oute fet · ys febelere than nouht,
And ded as a dore-nayle · bote yf the dede folwe;
Fides sine operibus mortua est.
Chastite with-oute charite · worth cheynid in helle;
Hit is as lewede as a lampe · that no lyght ys ynne.
Meny chapelayns aren chast · ac charite hem faileth;
Aren none hardur ne hongryour · than men of holy churche,
Auerouse and euel-willed · whanne thei ben auaunsed,
And vnkynde to hure kyn · and to alle crystine;
Thei chewen here charite · and chiden after more;

And encombred with couetyse · thei conne nat out crepe,
So harde hath aueryce · hasped hem to-gederes.
And that ys no treuthe of the trinite · bote trecherie and synne,
And luther ensample, leue me · to the lewede puple.
For thees aren wordes · wryten in the euangelye,
Date et dabitur uobis · for I dele 3ow alle.
And that is the lok of loue · that vnloseth grace,

176, 177 *are in* H *only; the rest are from* TDH$_2$. **B.** 180. goed L. **C.** 178. P *om.* 3e. lene to P; *but* MIFSGB *om.* to. 181. wam P. 182. sugge$\flat$ (*for* Iugge$\flat$) P. 189. veuele (*for* euel) P. wanne P. 193. to-gedderes P. 197. P *om.* for I dele 3ow alle.

To counforte the carful · acumbrid with synne.
Loue is the leueste thinge · that our lord askith,
And eke the graith gate · that goth into heuene.
For-thi I seiȝe as I seide er · be siȝte of thise tixtes,

To conforte the careful · acombred with synne.
Loue is leche of lyf · and nexte owre lorde selue,
And also the graith gate · that goth in-to heuene;
For-thi I sey as I seide · ere by the textis,
Whan alle tresores ben ytryed · treuthe is the beste.
Now haue I tolde the what treuthe is · that no tresore is bettere,
I may no lenger lenge the with · now loke the owre lorde!'

Whan alle tresouris arn trizede · treuthe is the beste.
Now haue I tolde the what treuthe is · that no tresour is betere,
I may no lengere lenge · now loke the oure lord.'

That conforteth alle cristine · encombred with synne.
So loue ys lech of lyue · and lysse of alle peyne,
And the graffe of grace · and graythest wey to heuene.
For-thy ich may say, as ich seide · by syght of the tixt,
Whenne alle tresours ben tryed · treuth ys the best;
Loue it,' quath that lady · 'lette may ich no lengere
To lere the what loue ys' · and leue at me hue lauhte.

Explicit passus secundus.

C. 199. conforteth P. 200. pyne P. 201. an (*for* and) P. graybost P. wey S; wei MF; way IB; P *om.* 203. Wenne P. 204. þe (*for* that) P. 205. wat P. P *om.* me.

PASSUS II.

Passus secundus de visione.

YIT kneled I on my knees · and cried hire of grace,
And seide, 'merci, madame · for Maries loue of heuene
That bar the blisful barn · that bouȝt vs on the roode,
Teche me the kuynde craft · forte knowe the False.'
'Loke on the lufthond,' quod heo · 'and seo wher he stondeth!

PASSUS II.

Passus secundus de visione, vt supra.

YET I courbed on my knees · and cryed hir of grace,
And seide, 'mercy, madame · for Marie loue of heuene,
That bar that blisful barne · that bouȝte vs on the rode,
Kenne me bi somme crafte · to knowe the Fals.'
'Loke vppon thi left half · and lo where he standeth,
Bothe Fals and Fauel · and here feres manye!'
I loked on my left half · as the lady me taughte,
And was war of a womman · wortheli yclothed,
Purfiled with pelure · the finest vpon erthe,
Y-crounede with a corone · the kyng hath non better.
Fetislich hir fyngres · were fretted with golde wyre,
And there-on red rubyes · as red as any glede,
And diamantz of derrest pris · and double manere safferes,
Orientales and ewages · enuenymes to destroye.
Hire robe was ful riche · of red scarlet engreyned,
With ribanes of red golde · and of riche stones;
Hire arraye me rauysshed · suche ricchesse saw I neuere;
I had wondre what she was · and whas wyf she were.
'What is this womman,' quod I · 'so worthily atired?'
'That is Mede the mayde,' quod she · 'hath noyed me ful oft,

A. 5. he TUD; heo V. (*for* Hue); *see* l. 5. wit P.
C. 5. war P. 9. wommon P. 10. He with FG; in PEMIS. 11. coronede P.

Bothe Fals and Fauuel · and al his hole meyne!'
I lokede on the luft half · as the ladi me tauhte;
Thenne was I war of a wommon · wonderliche clothed,
Purfylet with pelure · the ricchest vppon eorthe,
I-corouned with a coroune · the kyng hath no bettre;
Alle hir fyue fyngres · weore frettet with rynges,
Of the preciousest perre · that prince wered euere;
In red scarlet heo rod · i-rybaunt with gold;
Ther nis no qweene qweyntore · that quik is alyue.
'What is this wommon,' quod I · 'thus wonderliche a-tyret?'
'That is Meede the mayden,' quod heo · 'that hath me marred ofte,

PASSUS III.

Incipit passus tercius.

AND thanne ich knelede on my knees · and cryede to hure of grace,
And seide, 'mercy, madame · for Marye loue of heuene,
That bar that blessede barn · that boughte vs on the rode,
Kenne me by som craft · to knowe the false.'
'Loke vpon thy lyft half,' quath hue · 'lo whar he standith,
Bothe Fals and Fauel · and fykel-tonge Lyere,
And menye of hure maners · bothe men and wommen.'
Ich lokid on my lyft half · as the lady me tauhte,
And sauh a womman as yt were · wonderlich riche clothed.
Hue was purfild with peloure · non purere in erthe,
And coroned with a corone · the kynge hath no betere;
On alle hure fyue fyngres · rycheliche yrynged,
And ther-on rede rubies · and other riche stones.
Hure robe was ryccher · than ich rede couthe,
For to telle of hure atyre · no tyme haue ich nouth.
Hure a-raye with hure rychesse · rauesshede myn herte;
'Whas wyf hue were · and what was hure name,
Leue lady,' quath ich tho · 'layn nat yf ȝe knowen.'
'That ys Mede the mayde,' quath hue · 'that hath noyed me ofte,

16. wit P. 17. Was (*for* Whas) P. 18. Luue (*for* Leue) P.

And i-lakked my lore · to lordes aboute.
In the pope paleys heo is · as priue as my-seluen;
And so schulde heo nouȝt · for Wrong was hir syre;
Out of Wrong heo wox · to wrotherhele monye.
Ich ouhte ben herre then heo · I com of a bettre.
To-morwe worth the mariage i-mad · of Meede and of Fals;

And ylakked my lemman · that Lewte is hoten,
And bilowen hire to lordes · that lawes han to kepe.
In the popis paleys · she is pryue as my-self,
But sothenesse wolde nouȝt so · for she is a bastarde.
For Fals was hire fader · that hath a fykel tonge,
And neuere sothe seide · sithen he come to erthe.
And Mede is manered after hym · riȝte as kynde axeth;
Qualis pater, talis filius; bona arbor bonum fructum facit.

I auȝte ben herre than she · I cam of a better.
Mi fader the grete god is · and grounde of alle graces,
O god with-oute gy̯nnynge · and I his gode douȝter,
And hath ȝoue me mercy · to marye with my-self;
And what man be merciful · and lelly me loue,
Schal be my lorde and I his leef · in the heiȝe heuene.
And what man taketh Mede · myne hed dar I legge,
That he shal lese for hir loue · a lappe of *caritatis*.
How construeth Dauid the kynge · of men that taketh mede,
And men of this molde · that meynteneth treuthe,
And how ȝe shal saue ȝow-self · the sauter bereth witnesse,
Domine, quis habitabit in tabernaculo tuo, &c.
And now worth this Mede ymaried · al to a mansed schrewe,
To one Fals Fikel-tonge · a fendes biȝete;
Fauel thorw his faire speche · hath this folke enchaunted,
And al is Lyeres ledyng · that she is thus ywedded.
To-morwe worth ymade · the maydenes bruydale,
And there miȝte thow wite, if thow wolt · which thei ben alle

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A. 20. Out of THUD; In-to V. 27. wyte THUD; seo V. **B.** 27. *bona* C; *bonus* LWO. **C.** 20. lemmen P. 26. seilde P. P *om.* if. 27. kynden P. *Qualis* EFSB; *Talis* PIM. 30. herrer P. a IFSB;

Fauuel with feir speche · hath brou3t hem to-gedere,
And Gyle hath bi-gon hire so · heo graunteth al his wille;
And al is Li3eres ledynge · that heo leuen to-gedere.
To-morwe worth the mariage i-mad · soth as I the telle,
That thou miht wyte, 3if thou wolt · whuche thei ben alle

And lowen vp-on my lemman · that Leaute ys hoten,
And lackyd hym to lordes · that lawes han to kepe,
In kynges court and in comune court · contrarieth my techynge.
In the popes paleys · hue is pryuy as my-selue,
Ac sothnesse wold no3t so · for hue is a bastarde;
On Fauel was hure fader · that hath a fykel tonge,
And selde soth seith · bote if he souche gyle;
And Mede ys manered after hym · as men of kynde karpen,
Qualis pater, talis filius.
For shal néuere brere bere · beries as a vyne,
Ne on croked kene thorne · kynde fygys wexe;
Bona arbor bonum fructum facit.
Ich ouhte be herre than hue · ich kam of a betere,
The fader that me forth brouhte · *filius dei* he hoteth,
That neuere lyede ne lauhwede · in al hus lyf-tyme.
Ich am hus dere douheter · duchesse of heuene;
What man that me louyeth · and my wille folweth,
Shal haue grace to good ynow · and a good ende;
And what man that loueth Mede · my lyf ich dar wedde,
He shal lese for hure loue · a lappe of trewe charite.
That most helpeth men to heuene · mede most letteth,
Ich do hit vpon Dauid · the doumbe wol no3t lye;
Domine, quis habitabit in tabernaculo tuo, et cetera.
Dauid vn-doth hit hym-self · as the dumbe sheweth,
Et super innocentem munera non accepit.
To-morwe worth Mede wedded · to a mansed wrecche,
To on Fals Faithles · of the feendes kynne.
Fauel thorgh his flateryng speche · hath Mede foule enchantid,
And al is Lyers ledyng · that lady is thus ywedded.
Soffre now and thow shalt see · suche as ben apaiede,
That Mede ys thus ymaryed · to-morwe thow shalt aspie.
Know hym wel, yf thow kanst · and kep the fro hem alle

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kynde PE. 33. dure (*for* dere) P. 36. wat P. 37. luse (*for* lese) P. trywe P. 43. is (*for* his) P.

That longith to that lordschipe · the lasse and the more.
Know hem there ȝif thou canst · and kepe the fro hem alle,
ȝif thou wilnest to wone · with treuthe in his blisse;
Lerne his lawe that is so lele · and siththe teche it further.
I may no lengore lette · vr lord ich the bi-kenne;
And bi-come a good mon · for eny couetyse, ich rede.'
When heo was me fro · I loked and byhelde
Alle this riche retenaunce · that regneden with Fals
Weoren bede to the bruyt-ale · on bo two the sydes.
Sir Simonye is of-sent · to asseale the chartres,
That Fals othur Fauuel · bi eny fyn heolden,
And feffe Meede ther-with · in marriage for euere.

That longeth to that lordeship · the lasse and the more.
Knowe hem there if thow canst · and kepe thi tonge,
And lakke hem nouȝt, but lat hem worth · til lewte be iustice,
And haue powere to punyschen hem · thanne put forth thi resoun.
Now I bikenne the Criste,' quod she · 'and his clene moder,
And lat no conscience acombre the · for coueitise of Mede.'
Thus left me that lady · liggyng aslepe,
And how Mede was ymaried · in meteles me thouȝte;
That alle the riche retenauns · that regneth with the false
Were boden to the bridale · on bothe two sydes,
Of alle maner of men · the mene and the riche.
To marie this maydene · was many man assembled,
As of kniȝtes and of clerkis · and other comune poeple,
As sysours and sompnours · shireues and here clerkes,
Bedelles and bailliues · and brokoures of chaffare,
Forgoeres and vitaillers · and vokates of the arches;
I can nouȝt rekene the route · that ran aboute Mede.
Ac Symonye and Cyuile · and sisoures of courtes
Were moste pryue with Mede · of any men, me thouȝte.
Ac Fauel was the first · that fette hire out of boure,
And as a brokour brouȝte hir · to be with Fals enioigned.
Whan Symonye and Cyuile · seiȝ here beire wille,
Thei assented for siluer · to sei as bothe wolde.

A. 28–30. *These lines are from* UTH$_2$D; V *has only* l. 30, *thus*: Bote ȝif thow wilne to wone · with treuthe in his blisse. 31. *This line is in* H *only*. 34. *This line is in* H *only*. 35. retenaunce THUD; retenauntes V. 38.

Bote ther nas halle ne hous · that miht herborwe the peple,
That vche feld nas ful · of folk al a-boute.
In middes on a mountayne · at midmorwe tyde
Was piht vp a pauilon · a proud for the nones;
And ten thousend of tentes . i-tilled be-sydes,
For knihtes of cuntre · and comers aboute,
For sisours, for sumnors · for sullers, for buggers,
For lewede, for lerede · for laborers of thropes,
And for the flaterynge freeris · alle the foure orders,
Alle to witnesse wel · what the writ wolde,
In what manere that Meede · in mariage was i-feffed;
To beo fastnet with Fals · the fyn was arered.

That louyeth hure lordsheps · lasse other more.

Lacke hem noȝt, bote lete hem worthe · tyl Leaute be iustice,
And haue power for to punyshe hem · then put forth thy reson
For ich by-kenne the Crist,' quath hue · 'and hus clene moder,
Encombre neuere thy conscience · for couetyse of Mede.'
Thus left me that lady · lyggynge a slepe.
And ich sauh how Mede was maried · metyng as it were;
And al the riche retynaunce · that roteth hem on fals lyuynge
Were bede to that brudale · on bothe half the contreie,
Of many maner men · that were of Medes kunne;

Of knyȝtes, of clerkes · of other comune puple,
As sysours and somners · shereyues and here clerkes,
Budels and bailifs · and brokours of chaffare,
Forgoers and vytailers · and vokettus of the arches,
Ich kan noȝt rekenye the route · that ran a-boute Mede.
Ac Symonye and Ciuile · and sisours of contreis
Were most pryuye with Mede · of eny men, me thouȝte.
Ac Fauel was the ferste · that fette hure out of chambre,
And as a brocour broghte hure forth · to be ioynid with Fals.
Whanne Symonye and Cyuyle · sauh here botheres wil,
Thay assented ther-to · at seluers praiere.

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fyn THUD; peyne V. 48. *This line is in* H *only*. 50. I-feffed H; feffid TUD; V *om*. **B**. 59. chaffre L. **C**. 48. oþer þe more. 61. Forgoers IE; Vorgheours P. P *om*. the. 64. wit P. me þouȝte MFSBG; of þe route P. 65. P *om*. out. 66. wit P. 67. Wanne P.

Thenne Fauuel fet hire forth · and to Fals taketh,
In forwarde that Falsnesse · schal fynden hire for euere,
To be boxum and boun · his biddyng to folfulle,
In bedde and at borde · boxum and hende,
And as sir Simonye wol sigge · to suwen his wille.
Now Simonye and Siuyle · stondeth forth bothe,
Vn-foldyng the feffement · that Falsnes made,
And thus bygonnen the gomes · and gradden wel hyȝe:

Thanne lepe Lyer forth, and seide · 'lo here! a chartre,
That Gyle with his gret othes · gaf hem togidere,'
And preide Cyuile to se · and Symonye to rede it.
Thanne Symonye and Cyuile · stonden forth bothe,
And vnfoldeth the feffement · that Fals hath ymaked,
And thus bigynneth thes gomes · to greden ful heiȝ:—

'*Sciant presentes et futuri, &c.*

Witeth and witnesseth · that wonieth vpon this erthe,
That Mede is y-maried · more for here goodis,
Than for ani vertue or fairenesse · or any free kynde.
Falsenesse is faine of hire · for he wote hire riche;
And Fauel with his fikel speche · feffeth bi this chartre
To be prynces in pryde · and pouerte to dispise,
To bakbite, and to bosten · and bere fals witnesse,
To scorne and to scolde · and sclaundere to make,
Vnboxome and bolde · to breke the ten hestes;—
And the erldome of enuye · and wratthe togideres,
With the chastelet of chest · and chateryng-oute-of-resoun,
The counte of coueitise · and alle the costes aboute,
That is, vsure and auarice · alle I hem graunte,
In bargaines and in brokages · with al the borghe of theft;—
And al the lordeship of lecherye · in lenthe and in brede,
As in werkes and in wordes · and waitynges with eies,
And in wedes and in wisshynges · and with ydel thouȝtes,
There as wille wolde · and werkmanship failleth.'

A. 56. to suwen HTH$_2$; to sewen D; schewen V. 59. *From* HTUD; V *omits this line.* **B.** 87. borgthe L. 91. L *wrongly inserts* ne *before* wolde. wermanship L. **C.** 72. stoden MFG; stod P. 73. vnfeeld P. þat (*for* the) P. makede P. 75. bylyuen P. 78. shiche P. 79. Witen I;

'Hit witen and witnessen · that woneth vppon eorthe,
That I, Fauuel, feffe Fals · to that mayden Meede,
To be present in pruyde · for pore or for riche,
With the erldam of envye · euer forto laste,
With alle the lordschupe · of lengthe and of brede,
With the kingdom of couetise · I croune hem to-gedere;
With the yle of vsure · and auarice the false,

Thenne leep Liere forth, and seide · 'lo! here a chartre,
That Gyle hath gyue to Falsnesse · and graunted to Mede,'
And preyth Cyuyle it to see · and Symonye it to rede.
Thanne Symonye and Cyuyle · stoden forth bothe,
And vnfeelde the feffement · that Fals hadde maked;
Thanne sayde Symonye · that Cyuyl it herde,
'Alle that louen and byleuen · vp lykyng of Mede,
Leueth hit leelly · thys worth hure laste mede,
That folwen Falnesse · Fauel, and Lyere,
And me, and swiche men · that after mede wayten.
Sciant presentes et futuri: et cetera.
Witen alle and witnesen · that wonen here on erthe,
That Mede ys y-maried · more for hure richesse
Than for holynesse other hendenesse · other for hye kynde.
Falsnesse is fayne of hure · for he wot hure riche,
And Fauel hath with fals speche · feffed hem by this lettere
To be prynces of prude · and pouerte to dispice,
To bakbyten and to bosten · and bere fals witnesse,
To scornie and to scolde · sclaundres to make,
Both vnbuxom and bold · to breke the ten hestes.
The erldom of enuye · and yre he hym graunteth,
With the castel of cheste · and chatering-out-of-reson;
The countee of couetise · he consenteth to bothe,
With vserye and auerice · and other false sleithes
In bargeyns and in brocages · with the borghe of thufthe,
And al the lordshep of lecherye · in lengthe and in brede,
As in workes and in wordes · and waitynges of eyes,
In wedes and in wisshynges · and with ydel thouhtes,
Ther that wil wolde · and werkmanshup faileth.

Wyten B; Wetyn P. 80. P *inserts* mechel *after* hure. 82. his (*for* is) P. 85. bagbyten P. whitnesse P. 94. P *om. 2nd* and. waitenges P. 95. P *om.* in. wisshenges P.

Glotonye and grete othus · ich ȝiue hem i-feere,
With alle delytes and lustes · the deuel for to serue,
In al the seruyse of slouthe · I sese hem to-gedere:
To habben and to holden · and al heore heyres aftur,
With the purtinaunce of purgatorie · in-to the pyne of helle:
ȝeldynge for this thing · at the ȝeres ende,
Heore soules to Sathanas · to senden in-to pyne;
Ther to wonen with Wrong · whil god is in heuene.'
In witnesse of whuche thing · Wrong was the furste,
Pers the pardoner · Paulynes doctor,

Glotonye he gaf hem eke · and grete othes togydere,
And alday to drynke · at dyuerse tauernes,
And there to iangle and to iape · and iugge here euene cristene,
And in fastyng-dayes to frete · ar ful tyme were.
And thanne to sitten and soupen · til slepe hem assaille,
And breden as burgh-swyn · and bedden hem esily,
Tyl sleuth and slepe · slyken his sides;
And thanne wanhope to awake hym so · with no wille to amende,
For he leueth be lost · this is here last ende.
And thei to haue and to holde · and here eyres after,
A dwellyng with the deuel · and dampned be for eure,
With al the purtenaunces of purgatorie · in-to the pyne of helle.
ȝeldyng for this thinge · at one ȝeres ende,
Here soules to Sathan · to suffre with hym peynes,
And with him to wonye with wo · whil god is in heuene.
In witnesse of which thing · Wronge was the first,
And Pieres the pardonere · of Paulynes doctrine,
Bette the bedel · of Bokyngham-shire,
Rainalde the reue · of Rotland sokene,
Munde the mellere · and many moo other.
'In the date of the deuel · this dede I assele,
Bi siȝte of sire Symonye · and Cyuyles leue.'
Thenne tened hym Theologye · whan he this tale herde,
And seide to Cyuile · 'now sorwe mot thow haue,
Such weddynges to worche · to wratthe with Treuthe;
And ar this weddyng be wrouȝte · wo the bityde!

A. 76. doctor TH_2; doctoure D; douhter V. 79. *From* HH_2; V *omits this line.* 85. wraththe THUD; teone V.
B. 97. bredun L. 116.

Bette the budul · of Bokynghames schire,
Rondulf the reue · of Rotelondes sokene,
Taberes and tomblers · and tapesters fele,
Monde the mulnere · and moni mo othure.
In the date of the deuel · the deede was a-selet,
Be siht of sir Symoni · and notaries signes.
Then teonede him Teologye · whon he this tale herde,
And seide to Siuyle · 'serwe on thi lokkes,
Such weddyng to worche · to wraththe with Truthe;
And ar this weddyng beo wrouȝt · wo the beo-tyde!

Glotenye he geueth hem · and grete othes to-gederes,
Al day to drynke · at dyuerse tauernes,
Ther to iangly and to iape · and iuge her emcristine,
And fastingdayes to frete · by-for noon, and drynke
With spicerie, spek ydelnesse · in veen speche, and spene,
And suwye forth swych felaushep · tyl thei ben fallen in slewthe,
And a-wake with wanhope · and no wil to amende,
For he leyueth be ylost · when he hus lyf leteth:
This lif to folwie Falsnesse · and folk that on hym leueth,
After hure deth a dwelling · day with-outen ende
In Luciferes lordshup · as thys lettere sheweth,
With al the portinaunce of purgatorye · and the payne of helle.'

In witnesse of this thyng · Wrong was the ferste,
And Peres the pardoner · of Paulynes queste,
Bette the budele · of Banneburies sokne,
Reynald the reue · and redyngkynges menye,
Munde the mylnere · and meny mo othere.
In the date of the deuel · this dede ys a-seled,
By syght of syre Symonye · and Cyuyles leue.
Thanne tened hym Theologye · whenne he thys tale herde,
And seyde to syre Symonye · 'now sorwe mote thow haue,
Such a weddyng to worche · that wrathe myghte Treuthe.
And er this weddyng be wroughte · wo to al ȝoure consail!

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wendynges L. **C.** 97. hym (*for* hem) P. 100. an (*for* and) P. 104. wen P. 105. lyueþ P. 106. P *om.* a. 112. and þe (*for* and) P. 116. tened IFS; tenede MG; tuemede (*sic*) P. wenne P. 117. þow mote P. 118. treuhþe P.

For Meede is a Iuweler · a mayden of goode,
God graunte vs to ȝiue hire · ther Treuthe wol a-signe.
And thou hast ȝiuen hire to a gilour · god ȝiue the serwe!
The tixt telleth not so · Treuthe wot the sothe;
Dignus est operarius mercede sua;
Worthi is the werkmon · his hure to haue;
And thou hast feffet hire with Fals · fy on thi lawe!
For lechours and lyȝers · lihtliche thou leeuest,
Simonie and thi-self · schenden holichirche;

For Mede is moylere · of Amendes engendred,
And god graunteth to gyf · Mede to Treuthe,
And thow hast gyuen hire to a gyloure · now god gyf the sorwe!
Thi tixt telleth the nouȝt so · Treuthe wote the sothe,
For *dignus est operarius* · his hyre to haue,
And thow hast fest hire to Fals · fy on thi lawe!
For al by lesynges thow lyuest · and lecherouse werkes,
Symonye and thi-self · schenden holicherche,

The notaries and ȝee · noyeth the peple,
ȝe shul abiggen it bothe · bi god that me made!
Wel ȝe witen, wernardes · but if ȝowre witte faille,
That Fals is faithlees · and fikel in his werkes,
And was a bastarde y-bore · of Belsabubbes kynne.
And Mede is moylere · a mayden of gode,
And myȝte kisse the kynge · for cosyn, an she wolde.
For-thi worcheth bi wisdome · and bi witt also,

A. 89. to THUD; V *om.* 95, 96. *From* H; V *omits both lines.* 97. Nataries V. **B.** 118. engendreth L. **C.** 122. moder MIBG; dame

ȝe schule abygge it bothe · by god that me made,
At oo ȝeris ende · whan ȝe reken schul;
He and theose notaries · anuyȝen the peple.
For wel ȝe witen, wernardes! · but ȝif or wit fayle,
That Fals is a faytur · a faylere of werkes,
And a bastard i-boren · of Belsabubbes kunne.
And Meede is a Iuweler · a mayden ful gent;
Heo mihte cusse the kyng · for cosyn, ȝif heo schulde.
Worcheth bi wisdam · and bi wit aftur;

For Mede is moillere · Amendes was here dame;
Thouh Fals were hure fader · and Fykel-tonge hure syre,
Amendes was hure moder · by trewe mennes lokyng.
With-oute hure moder Amendes · Mede may noght be wedded,
For Treuth plyghte hure treuthe · to wedde on of hure douhteres,
And god grauntede it were so · so that no gyle were,
And thow hast ygeue hure as Gyle taughte · god ȝyue the sorwe!
For Cyuyl and thy selue . selde fulfilleth
That god wolde were ydo · with-oute som deceite.
Ich Theologie the tixt knowe · and trewe dome wytnesseth,
That Laurens the Leuite · lyggynge on the gredire,
Loked vp to oure lorde · and a-loud seide,
"God, of thy grace · heuene gates opene,
For ich, man, of thy mercy · mede haue deserued!"
And syththe man may an hey · mede of god deserue,
Hit semeth ful sothly · ryght so on erthe,
That Mede may be wedded · to no man bote to Treuthe;
And thow hast feffyd hure with Fals · fy on suche lawe!
For thorw lesynges ȝe lacchen · largeliche mede.
That ȝe nemeth and notaries · to nauht by-gynneth brynge
Holy churche, and charite · ȝe cheweth and deuoureth.
ȝe shulle a-bygge bothe · bote ȝe a-mende the sonnere.
For wel ȝe wyten, wernardes · as holy wryt telleth,
That Fals ys faithles · the fend ys hus syre,
And as a bastard ybore · byȝute was he neuere.
And Mede ys moillere · a maiden of goode,
Hue myghte cusse the kyng · as for hus kynswomman.
For-thy worcheth by wisdome · and by witte al-so,

PEFS. mennes MI; men PEFS. 138. lacchen MIFS; lauhte P,

Ledeth hire to Londone · ther lawe is i-hondlet,
3if eny leute wol loken · that thei liggen to-gedere,
And 3if the Iustise wol Iugge hire · to be Ioynet with Fals.
3it be-war of the weddyng · for witti is Treuthe;
For Concience is of his counseil · and knoweth ou vchone;
And 3if he fynde such defaute · that 3e with Fals holden,
Hit schal bi-sitten oure soules · sore atte laste.'
Herto assentid Syuyle · but Symonye ne wolde
Tyle he had syluer · for his sawes and his selynge.
Then fet Fauel forth · floreynes i-nowe,
And bad Gyle go to · and 3yue gold aboute,
And namely to this notaries · that hem non lacked;

And ledeth hire to Londoun · there lawe is yshewed,
If any lawe wil loke · thei ligge togederes.
And thou3 Iustices iugge hir · to be ioigned with Fals,
3et beth war of weddyng · for witty is Truthe,
And Conscience is of his conseille · and knoweth 3ow vchone;
And if he fynde 3ow in defaute · and with the fals holde,
It shal bisitte 3owre soules · ful soure atte laste!'
Here-to assenteth Cyuile · ac Symonye ne wolde,
Tyl he had siluer for his seruise · and also the notaries.
Thanne fette Fauel forth · floreynes ynowe,
And bad Gyle to gyue · golde al aboute,
And namelich to the notaries · that hem none ne faille,
And feffe False-witnes · with floreines ynowe;
'For he may Mede amaistrye · and maken at my wille.'
Tho this golde was gyue · grete was the thonkynge
To Fals and to Fauel · for her faire 3iftes,
And comen to conforte · fram care the Fals,
And seiden, 'certis, sire · cesse shal we neuere
Til Mede be thi wedded wyf · thorw wittis of vs alle.
For we haue Mede amaistried · with owre mery speche,
That she graunteth to gon · with a gode wille,
To Londoun, to loke · 3if that the lawe wolde
Iugge 3ow ioyntly · in ioye for euere.'
Thanne was Falsenesse fayne · and Fauel as blithe,

A. 108. of his counseil TUD; on of his V. 111–127. *From* H; *also* (*except* l. 118) *in* TUD. V *omits these lines.* **C.** 148. londen P. wer P.

And feffe False-witnesse · with florens I-nowe,
For he may Mede a-maysteren · and make hir at his wylle;
For where falsenes is oft fownden · there feith fayleth.
Thoo the gold was ȝouen · grete were the thonkes
To False and to Fauel · for her feyre ȝyftus.
Many comen, from care · to counforte the false,
And sworen on the hoolydom · that 'cesse schul we neuere
Or Mede be thi weddud wyf · thorouȝ witte of vs alle.
For we han Mede a-maysterd · with oure myri wordis
That heo graunteth to goo · with a good wille,
To London, to loke · if the lawe wole
Iugge ȝou Ioyntely · to be Ioyned for euer.'
Thenne was Fals fayn · and Fauuel also blithe,

And ledeth hure to Londoun · wher lawe may declare,
Yf matrimoine may be · of Mede and of Falshede.
And thow iustices en-ioynen hem · thorgh iurers othes,
ȝut be war of the weddyng · for wytty is Treuthe,
And Conscience is of hus consail · and knoweth ȝow alle;
And yf he fynde ȝow in defaute · and with the false holde,
Hit shal sitte ȝoure soules · ful soure at the laste.'
Her-to a-sentyd Cyuyle · ac Symonie ne wolde,
Tyl he hadde seluer for the seel · and sygnes of notaries.
Tho fette Fauel forth · floreynes y-nowe,
And bad Gyle 'go gyue · gold al a-boute,
Nameliche, to notaries · that non of hem faille;
And feffe Falsnesse · with floreynes ynowe,
For he may Mede amaistren · with hus myry speche.'
Tho this gold was gyuen · gret was the thonkynge
That Fals and Fauel hadde · for here faire ȝyftes,
And comen ful courteislich · to conforte the False.
Thei seide to hym softeliche · 'cesse shulle we neuere;
Til Mede be thy wedded wyf · we wolle nouht stynte.
For we han Mede a-maistrid · thorw oure myrye tonge,
That hue graunteth to go · with a good wille
To Londoun, and loke · yf lawe wol iuge;
To be maried for monye · Mede hath a-sented.'
Than was Fauel fayne · and Falsnesse blythe,

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150. Iustices IFSE; Iustice PM. 151. wedyng P. 153. P *om.* and.
156. a (*for* and) P. 160. wit P. 169. londen P.

And lette sompne alle men · in cuntre a-boute,
To arayen hem redi · bothe burgeys and schirreues,
To weende with hem to Westmunster · to witnesse the deede.
Thenne careden heo for caples · to carien hem thider;
Bote Fauuel fette forth · foles of the beste,
And sette Meede on a schirreues bak · i-schood al newe,
And Fals on a sysoures backe · that softly trotted;
(For falsnes aȝeyn the feith · sisoures he defouleth,
Thoruȝ comburance of couetyse · clymben aȝeyn truthe,
That the feith is defouled · and falsly defamed,
And falsnes is a lord i-woxe · and lyueth as hym lyketh):
Fauel on a feyre speche · ful feyntly a-tyred;
(For feire speche that is feithles · is falsnes brother;

And leten sompne alle segges · in schires aboute,
And bad hem alle be bown · beggeres and othere,
To wenden wyth hem to Westmynstre · to witnesse this dede.
Ac thanne cared thei for caplus · to kairen hem thider,
And Fauel fette forth thanne · folus ynowe;
And sette Mede vpon a schyreue · shodde al newe,
And Fals sat on a sisoure · that softlich trotted,
And Fauel on a flaterere · fetislich atired.
Tho haued notaries none · annoyed thei were,
For Symonye and Cyuile · shulde on hire fete gange.
Ac thanne swore Symonye · and Cyuile bothe,
That sompnoures shulde be sadled · and serue hem vchone,
And lat apparaille this prouisoures · in palfreis wyse;—
'Sire Symonye hym-seluen · shal sitte vpon here bakkes.
Denes and suddenes · drawe ȝow togideres,
Erchdekenes and officiales · and alle ȝowre regystreres,
Lat sadel hem with siluer · owre synne to suffre,
As auoutrie and deuorses · and derne vsurye,
To bere bischopes aboute · abrode in visytynge.
Paulynes pryues · for pleyntes in the consistorie,
Shul serue my-self · that Cyuile is nempned;
And cartesadel the comissarie · owre carte shal he lede,
And fecchen vs vytailles · at *fornicatores*.

A. 135–143. *These lines are quoted from* H, *and those in parentheses occur in* H *only*. V *has only the one line*—And Fauuel on a Feir speche · Feyntliche atyret. T *and* D *have only the two lines*—

And thus sysoures ben sompned · the false to serue,
And feire-speche Fauel · that moche folke desceyueth).
Thenne notaries none hors hedden · anuyed thei weore,
That Symonie and Siuile · schulden go on foote.
Thenne seide Siuile · and swor bi the roode,
That sompnors schulde ben sadelet · and seruen hem vchone;
'And lette apparayle prouisours · on palfreis wyse,
Sire Symonye hym-selfe · shal sitte on here bakkis,
And alle denes and sodenes · as destreres dihten,
For thei schullen beren bisschops · and bringen hem to reste.
Paulines peple · for playntes in constorie
Schal seruen my-self · that Siuile hette;
Let cart-sadele vr commissarie · vr cart he schal drawe,
And fetten .vr vitayles · of the fornicatours;

And leten sompne alle segges · in eche syde a-boute,
And bed hem alle ben boun · beggeres and othere,
To wenden with hem to Westemynstre · hus weddyng to honoure.
Ac hakeneyes hadde thei none · bote hakeneyes to hyre;
Thenne gan Gyle borwe hors · at meny grete maistres,
And shope that a shereyue · sholde bere Mede
Softliche in saumbury · fram syse to syse.
Fals and Fauel · sholde fecche forth sisours,
And ride on hem and on reues · ryght faste by Mede.
Symonye and Cyuyle · seiden and sworen
That prestes and prouisours · sholde prelates seruen,
'And ich my-self Cyuyle · and Symonye my felawe
Wollen ryden vp-on rectours · and riche men deuoutours,
And notories on persons · that permuten ofte,
And on poure prouysors · and on a-peles in the arches.
Somenours and southdenes · that *supersedeas* taketh,
On hem that louyeth lecherie · lepeth vp and rydeth,
On executores and suche men · cometh softliche after.
And let cople the comissarie · oure cart shal he drawe,
And fecche forth oure vitailes · of *fornicatores*.

And fals sat on a sisour · þat softeliche trottide,
And fauel vpon fair speche · fetisliche atirid.

U *has the same, omitting* sat; H_2 *has also two similar lines.* 149. *From* THUD; V *omits this line.* **B.** 165. flatere L. 175. deuoses L. **C.** 185. on IE; and PMS. 186. in IE; of MS; on P.

And make Liȝere a long cart · to leden alle this othure
Fabulers and faytours · that on fote rennen.'
Now Fals and Fauuel · fareth forth to-gedere,
And Meede in the middel · and al the meyne aftur.
I haue no tome to telle · the tayl that hem folweth,
Of so mony maner men · that on molde liuen.
Bote Gyle was for-goere · and gyede hem alle.
Sothnesse sauh hem wel · and seide bote luyte,
Bote prikede on his palfrey · and passede hem alle,
And com to the kynges court · and Concience tolde,
And Concience to the kyng · carpede hit aftur.
'Now be Crist,' quod the kyng · 'ȝif I mihte chacche
Fals othur Fauwel · or eny of his feeres,

And maketh of Lyer a longe carte · to lede alle these othere,
As freres and faitours · that on here fete rennen.'
And thus Fals and Fauel · fareth forth togideres,
And Mede in the myddes · and alle thise men after.
I haue no tome to telle · the taille that hem folweth,
Of many maner man · that on this molde libbeth;
Ac Gyle was forgoer · and gyed hem alle.
Sothenesse seiȝ hym wel · and seide but a litel,
And priked his palfrey · and passed hem alle,
And come to the kynges courte · and Conscience it tolde,
And Conscience to the kynge · carped it after.
'Now by Cryst,' quod the kynge · 'and I cacche myȝte
Fals or Fauel · or any of his feres,
I wolde be wroke of tho wrecches · that worcheth so ille,
And don hem hange by the hals · and alle that hem meynteneth!
Shal neure man of molde · meynprise the leste,
But riȝte as the lawe wil loke · late falle on hem alle.'
And comanded a constable · that come atte furst,
To 'attache tho tyrauntz · for eny thynge, I hote,
And fettereth fast Falsenesse · for enykynnes ȝiftes,
And gurdeth of Gyles hed · and lat hym go no furthere.

And ȝif ȝe lacche Lyer · late hym nouȝt ascapen

A. 160. tome T; tyme for H; tunge UD; while V. 162. gyede TUD;

I wolde be wreken on this wrecches · that worchen so ille,
And don hem hongen bi the hals · and al that hem meyntenen;
Schal neuer mon vppon molde · meyntene the leste,
But riht as the lawe loketh · let fallen of hem alle.
And comaunde the cunstable · that com at the furste,
To a-tache the traytours · for eny tresour,
Ich hote, ȝe fetere Fals faste · for eny kunnes ȝiftus,
And gurdeth of Gyles hed · let him go no forther;
And bringeth Meede to me · maugre hem alle.
Symonye and Siuile · I seende hem to warne,
That holichirche for hem · worth harmet for euere.
And ȝif ȝe chacche Lyȝere · let him not a-skape,

Maketh of Lyer a lang cart · to lede alle these othere,
As fobbes and faitours · that on hure fet rennen.'
Thanne Fals and Fauel · ryden forth to-gederes,
And Mede in the myddes · and alle thuse men after.
Ich haue no tome to telle · the tail that hem folweth,
Of many manere men · for Medes sake sent after;
Ac gile was forgoere · to gyen al the puple,
For to wisse hem the weye · and with Mede a-byde.
Sothnesse seih hem alle · and seide bote a lytel,
And priked forth on pacience · and passede hem alle,
And cam to the kynges court; · to Conscience he tolde,
And Conscience to the kyng · carped it after.
'Now by Cryst,' quath the kyng · 'and ich cacche myghte
Fals other Fauel · other here felawe Lyere,
Ich wolde be wreke on tho wrecches · and on here werkus alle,
And do hem hongy by the hals · and alle that hem maynteneth,
Shal neuere man on this molde · maynpryse the leste,
But ryght as the lawe loketh · let falle on hem alle!'
He comaundyd a constable · that cam at the furste,
'Go atache tho tyrauns · for eny tresour, ich hote,
Let feterye fast Falsnesse · for eny kynnes ȝiftes,
And gurd of Gyles hefd · and lete hym go no wyddere,
And brynge Mede to me · maugre hem alle.
And if ȝe lacche Lyere · let hym nat a-skapie

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gilede V. 171. man THD; non (*for* mon) V. C. 192. þese F; þise I; þes PS. 201. an P. 209. But MIF; And PES.

To ben set on the pillori · for eny preyere;
I bydde thee awayte hem wele · let non of hem ascape.'
  Dreede at the dore stood · and the dune herde,
And wihtliche wente · to warne the False,
And bad him faste to fle · and his feeres eke.
Thenne Fals for fere · fleih to the freeres,
And Gyle doth him to go · a-gast for to dyȝe;
Bote marchaundes metten with him · and maaden him to abyden,
Bi-souȝten him in heore schoppes · to sullen heore ware,
Apparayleden him as a prentis · the peple for to serue.
Liȝtliche Lyȝere · leop a-wey thennes,
Lurkede thorw lones · to-logged of monye;

Er he be put on the pilorye · for eny preyere, I hote;
And bryngeth Mede to me · maugre hem alle.'
  Drede atte dore stode · and the dome herde,
And how the kynge comaunded · constables and seriantz,
Falsenesse and his felawschip · to fettren an to bynden.
Thanne Drede went wiȝtliche · and warned the Fals,
And bad hym flee for fere · and his felawes alle.
  Falsenesse for fere thanne · fleiȝ to the freres,
And Gyle doth hym to go · agast for to dye.
Ac marchantz mette with hym · and made hym abide,
And bishetten hym in here shope · to shewen here ware,
And apparailled hym as a prentice · the poeple to serue.
  Liȝtliche Lyer · lepe awey thanne,
Lorkynge thorw lanes · to-lugged of manye.
He was nawhere welcome · for his manye tales,
Ouer-al yhowted · and yhote trusse;
Tyl pardoneres haued pite · and pulled hym in-to house.
They wesshen hym and wyped hym · and wonden hym in cloutes,
And sente hym with seles · on sondayes to cherches,
And gaf pardoun for pens · poundmel aboute.
Thanne loured leches · and lettres thei sent,
That he sholde wonye with hem · wateres to loke.
Spiceres spoke with hym · to spien here ware,
For he couth of here craft · and knewe many gommes.
Ac mynstralles and messageres · mette with hym ones,
And helden hym an half-ȝere · and elleuene dayes.

A. 182. *This line is in* H *only.* 200. wone THUD; ben V. hem

He nas nouȝwher wel-come · for his mony tales,
Bote ouur-al i-hunted · and hote to trusse.
Pardoners hedden pite · and putten him to house,
Wosschen him and wrongen him · and wounden him in cloutes,
And senden him on Sonendayes · with seales to churches,
And ȝaf pardun for pons · poundmele a-boute.
This leornden this leches · and lettres him senden
For to wone with hem · watres to loke.
Spicers speeken with him · to a-spien heore ware,
For he kennede him in heore craft · and kneuȝ mony gummes.
Munstrals and messagers · metten with him ones,
And with-heolde him half a ȝer · and elleuene wykes.

Er he be put on the pullery · for eny preier, ich hote!'
Drede stod at the dore · and al that duene herde,
What the kynges wil was · and wyghtlyche he wente,
And bad Falsnesse to flee · and hus feren alle.
Falsnesse for fere tho · flegh to the freres,
And Gyle dud hym to gon · agast for to deye;
Ac marchauns metten with hym · and made hym abyde,
And shutten hym in here shoppes · to shewen here ware,
And parailed hym lyke here prentys · the puple to seruen.
Lyghtliche Lyere · lep a-way thennes,
Lorkynge thorw lanes · to-logged of menye.
He was nawher welcome · for hus meny tales,
Ouer-al houted out · and yhote trusse,
Til pardoners hadden pitte · and pullede hym to house.
Thei woshe hym and wypede hym · and wonde hym in cloutes,
And sente hym on Sonnedayes · with seeles to churches,
And ȝaf pardon for pans · pound-meel a-boute.
Thanne lourede leches · and letters thei senten,
That Lyer shold wony with hem · waters to loke.
Spicers to hym speke · to aspie here ware,
For he can on here crafte · and knoweth meny gommes.
Ac mynstrales and messagers · mette with Lyere ones,
And with-helde hym half a ȝere · and elleue dayes.

THD; him V. 204. with-heode V. **B.** 227. mynstalles L. **C.** 216. P *om.* the. preior P. 218. whyghtlyche P. 220. P *om.* tho. 225. away þo fro þennes P. 227. nawer wolcome P. 228. trosse P. 229. pollede P. 231. on MIFSG; in P. 232. ȝaf hym P. for MIFSEG; of P. 235. hem (*for* hym) P. 237. ones MIG; one P.

Freres with feir speches · fetten him thennes;
For knowynge of comers · kepten him as a frere;
Bote he hath leue to lepen out · as ofte as him lyketh,
And is wel-come whon he wole · and woneth with hem ofte.

Freres with faire speche · fetten hym thennes,
And for knowyng of comeres · coped hym as a frere.
Ac he hath leue to lepe out · as oft as hym liketh,
And is welcome whan he wil · and woneth wyth hem oft.

Alle fledden for fere · and flowen in-to hernes,
Saue Mede the mayde · na mo durst abide.
Ac trewli to telle · she trembled for drede,
And ek wept and wronge · whan she was attached.

And alle fledden for fere · and flowen in-to huirnes;
Saue Meede the mayden · no mon dorste abyde;
But trewely to telle · heo tremblede for fere,
And eke wepte and wrong hire hondes · whon heo was a-tachet.

Ac Freres thorw fayre speche · fetten hym thennes;
For knowynge of comers · thei copyde hym as a frere;
Ac he hath leue to lepen out · as ofte as hym lyketh,
And ys welcome whanne he cometh · and woneth with hem ofte.
Symonye and Cyuyle · senten to Rome,
And putte hem thorw a-peles · in the popes grace.
Ac Conscience to the kyng · a-cusede hem bothe,
And seide, 'syre kyng, by Cryst · bote clerkus amende,
Thi kyngdom thorw here couetyse · wol out of kynde wende,
And holy churche thorw hem · worth harmed for euere.'
Alle fledden for fere · and flowen in-to hernes;
Saue Mede the mayde · no mo dorste a-byde.
Ac treweliche to telle · hue tremblede for fere,
And bothe wrang and wepte · whanne hue was a-tached.

Hic explicit passus iij^us^.

C. 242. wolcome P. wanne P. 247. weynde P; *see* C. iv. 19. 250. þat (*for* the) P. 251. tryweliche P. 252. wanne P. atachede P.

PASSUS III.

Passus Tercius de Visione.

NOW is Meede the mayden i-nomen · and no mo ‘of hem alle,
With beodeles and baylyfs · i-brouht to the kyng.
The kyng clepet a clerke · (I knowe not his nome),
To take Meede the mayden · and maken hire at ese.
‘Ichulle assayen hire my-self · and sothliche aposen

PASSUS III.

Passus tertius.

NOW is Mede the mayde · and namo of hem alle
With bedellus and with bayllyues · brouȝt bifor the kyng.
The kyng called a clerke · can I nouȝt his name,
To take Mede the mayde · and make hire at ese.
‘I shal assaye hir my-self · and sothelich appose
What man of this molde · that hire were leueste.
And if she worche bi my witte · and my wille folwe,
I wil forgyue hir this gilte · so me god help!’
Curteysliche the clerke thanne · as the kyng hight,
Toke Mede bi the middel · and brouȝte hir in-to chaumbre,

And there was myrthe and mynstralcye · Mede to plese.
They that wonyeth in Westmynstre · worschiped hir alle;
Gentelliche with ioye · the iustices somme
Busked hem to the boure · there the birde dwelled,
To conforte hire kyndely · by clergise leue,
And seiden, ‘mourne nought, Mede · ne make thow no sorwe,
For we wil wisse the kynge · and thi wey shape,
To be wedded at thi wille · and where the leue liketh,

A. 3. clerke THUD; cler V.
B. 17. wil R; wol W; L *om.*
C. 3. ys (*for* hys) P. 4. þat (*for* the) P. 6. Wat P. 7. mennes F;

What mon in this world · that hire weore leouest.
And ȝif heo worche be my wit · and my wil folewe,
I schal for-ȝiue hire the gult · so me god helpe!'
Corteisliche the clerk tho · as the kyng hihte,
Tok the mayden bi the middel · and brouhte hire to chaumbre.
Ther was murthe and munstralsye · Meede with to plese;
Heo that woneth at Westmunstre · worschipeth hire alle.
Gentiliche with Ioye · the Iustise soone
Busked him in-to the bour · ther the buyrde was inne,
Cumfortede hire kuyndely · and made hire good chere,
And seide, 'Mourne thou not, Meede, · ne make thou no serwe,
For we wolen wysen the kyng · and thi wey schapen,

PASSUS IV.

Incipit passus quartus.

NOW is Mede the mayde · and no mo of hem alle
Thorw bedeles and bailifs · brouht by-fore the kynge.
The kyng kallid a clerk · ich can nouht hys name,
To take Mede the mayde · and make here at ese;
'Ich shal asaye hure my-self · and sothliche apose,
What man of thys worlde · that hure is leuest haue?
And yf hue wirche wisliche · by wys mennes counsail,
Ich wolle for-gyue hure alle hure gultes · so me god helpe!'
Cortesliche the clerk thenne · as the kynge hyghte,
Toke Mede by the myddel · and myldeliche here broughte
In-to boure with blysse · and by hure gan sitte.
Ther was myrthe and mynstralcy · Mede to plesen;
That wenden to Westmynstre · worshupde hure meny.
Gentelich with ioye · iustices somme
Buskede hem to the boure · ther this berde dwellyd,
Confortynge hure as thei couthe · by the clerkus leue,
And seyde, 'morne nat, Mede · ne make thow no sorwe;
For we wolle wisse the kyng · and thy wey shape
For to wende at thy wil · wher the luf lyketh,

men PEIS. 10. mydel P. 12. and MIFSE; of P. 17. ne MIF; PES *om.* 18. shappe P.

For alle Concience craft · and casten, as I trouwe,
That thou schalt haue bothe myȝt and maystrye · and make what the liketh
With the kynge and the comyns · and the courte bothe.'
  Mildeliche thenne Meede · merciede hem alle
Of heore grete goodnesse · and ȝaf hem vchone
Coupes of clene gold · and peces of seluer,
Rynges with rubyes · and richesses i-nouwe,
The leste man of here mayne · a mutoun of gold.
  Thenne lauȝten thei leue · this lordynges, at meede.
With that ther come clerkes · to cumforte the same:
'We biddeth the be blithe · for we beoth thin owne,
Forte worche thi wil · while vr lyf dureth.'

For al Conscience caste · or craft, as I trowe!'
  Mildeliche Mede thanne · mercyed hem alle
Of theire gret goodnesse · and gaf hem vchone
Coupes of clene golde · and coppis of siluer,
Rynges with rubies · and ricchesses manye,
The leste man of here meyne · a motoun of golde.
Thanne lauȝte thei leue · this lordes, at Mede.
  With that comen clerkis · to conforte hir the same,
And beden hire be blithe · 'for we beth thine owne,
For to worche thi wille · the while thow myȝte laste.'
Hendeliche heo thanne · bihight hem the same,
To 'loue ȝow lelli · and lordes to make,
And in the consistorie atte courte · do calle ȝowre names;
Shal no lewdnesse lette · the leode that I louye,
That he ne worth first auanced · for I am biknowen
There konnyng clerkes · shul clokke bihynde.'
  Thanne come there a confessoure · coped as a frere,
To Mede the mayde · he mellud this wordes,
And seide ful softly · in shrifte as it were,
'Theiȝ lewed men and lered men · had leyne by the bothe,
And falsenesse haued yfolwed the · al this fyfty wyntre,
I shal assoille the my-selue · for a seme of whete,

A. 19, 20. *These lines are in* H *only.* 25. *From* THUD; V *omits this line.* 26. lauȝten HD; lauȝte TU; tok V. **C.** 20. a (*for* and) P.

Hendeliche thenne heo · be-hihte hem the same,
To louen hem lelly · and lordes to maken,
And in constorie at court · to tellen heore names.
'Schal no lewednesse hem lette · the lewedeste that I loue
That he ne worth avaunset; · for icham i-knowe
Ther cunnynge clerkes · schul couche be-hynde.'
Thenne com ther a confessour · i-copet as a frere;
To Meede the mayden · ful mekeliche he loutede,
And seide ful softely · in schrift as hit weore,
'Thauh lerede and lewede · hedden leyen bi the alle,
And thauȝ Fals hedde folewed the · this fiftene winter,
I schal asoyle the my-self · for a summe of whete,

For alle Consciences cast · and craft, as ich trowe!'
Mildeliche Mede tho · merciede hem alle
Of hure grete goudnesse · and gaf hem echone
Coupes of clene gold · and coppes of seluer,
Rynges with rubies · and other riche ȝiftes,
The leste man of here meyne · a moton of golde.
Whenne thei had lauht here leue · at thys lady mede,
Thenne comen clerkus · to comfortye hure samen,
And beden here be blythe · 'for we ben thyn owne,
For to worche thy wil · the while we mowe dure.'
And Mede hendiliche · by-hyht hem the same,
To louen hem leellich · and lordes hem make,
'And porchace ȝow prouendres · while ȝoure pans lasteth,
And bigge ȝow benefices · pluralite to haue,
And in constorie atte court · do calle ȝoure names.
Shal no lewednesse lette · the clerk that ich louye,
That he ne worth ferst auanced · for ich am biknowe,
Ther connynge clerkus · shulleth clocke by-hynde.'
Thenne com ther a confessour · coped as a frere,
To Mede that mayde · myldelich he sayde,
'Thauh lered men and lewede · had layen by the bothe,
And falshede yfounden the · al this fourty wynter,
Ich shal a-soily the my-selue · for a seem of whete,

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25. man I; PEMFS *om.* 26. Wenne P. 28. owne FMS; owe PG. 29. wile P. 30. Ande P. 32. prouendres MIFSE; prouenders P. wile P. 36. biknowe MIG; knowen P. 42. of MEFS; P *om.*

And eke be thi baude · and bere wel thin ernde
Among clerkes and knihtes · concience to falle.'
Thenne Meede for hire misdede · to that mon knelede,
And schrof hire of hir sunnes · schomeliche, I trouwe.
Heo tolde him a tale · and tok him a noble,
For to ben hire beode-mon · and hire baude after.
Thene he asoylede hire soone · and sith to hire seide,
'We han a wyndow in worching · wol stonden vs ful heiȝe:

And also be thi bedeman · and bere wel thi message,
Amonges kniȝtes and clerkis · conscience to torne.'
Thanne Mede for here mysdedes · to that man kneled,
And shroue hire of hire shrewednesse · shamelees, I trowe,
Tolde hym a tale · and toke hym a noble,
Forto ben hire bedeman · and hire brokour als.
Thanne he assoilled hir sone · and sithen he seyde,
'We han a wyndowe a wirchyng · wil sitten vs ful heigh:
Woldestow glase that gable · and graue there-inne thi name,
Siker sholde thi soule be · heuene to haue.'
'Wist I that,' quod that womman · 'I wolde nouȝt spare
For to be ȝowre frende, frere · and faille ȝow neure
Whil ȝe loue lordes · that lechery haunteth,
And lakketh nouȝt ladis · that loueth wel the same.
It is frelete of flesh · ȝe fynde it in bokes,
And a course of kynde · wher-of we komen alle;
Who may scape the sklaundre · the skathe is sone amended;
It is synne of the seuene · sonnest relessed.
Haue mercy,' quod Mede · 'of men that it haunte,
And I shal keure ȝowre kirke · ȝowre cloystre do maken,
Wowes do whiten · and wyndowes glasen,
Do peynten and purtraye · and paye for the makynge,
That eury segge shal seyn · I am sustre of ȝowre hous.'
Ac god to alle good folke · suche grauynge defendeth,
To writen in wyndowes · of here wel dedes,
On auenture pruyde be peynted there · and pompe of the worlde;
For Crist knoweth thi conscience · and thi kynde wille,

A. 48. sith H; sithen TU; sethen D; V *om.* **B.** 48. ful WCRO; wel L. 58. the WO; LC *om.* 61. whiten C; whitten L. **C.** 44. knyȝthes P. 45. man MIFSG; frere P. 48. erende EI; ernede P.

Woldustow glase the gable · and graue therinne thi nome,
Siker schulde thi soule ben · for to dwellen in heuene.'
'Wust I that,' quod the wommon · 'ther nis nouthur wyndou ne auter,
That I ne schulde maken othur mende · and my nome write,
That vche mon schulde seye · ich were suster of house.'
Bote god to alle good folk · such grauynge defendet,

And ȝut be thy bedman · and brynge a-doun conscience
A-mong kynges and knyȝtes · and clerkus, if the lyke.'
Thenne Mede for hure mysdedes · to this man knelyd,
Shrof hure of here synnes · shameles, y leyue,
Told hym a tale · and took hym a noble
For to be hure bedman · and bere wel hure erende,
Among knyȝtes and clerkus · conscience to turne.
And he assoiled hure sone · and setthen he seide,
'We haue a wyndow a worchyng · wol stonden ous ful hye;
Wolde ȝe glase the gable · and graue ther ȝoure name,
In masse and in matyns · for Mede we shulleth synge
Solenliche and sothlich · as for a sustre of oure ordre.'
Louelich that lady · lauhynge seyde,
'Ich shal be ȝoure frende, frere · and faille ȝow neuere,
The while ȝe louyeth thuse lordes · that lecherye haunten,
And lackieth noȝt thuse ladies · that louyeth the same.
Hit is bote frelete of flesch · ȝe fynden wel in bokis,
And a cours of kynde · wher-of we comen alle.
Ho may a-scapie the sclaundere · the scathe may sone be mendyd,
Hit ys synne as of seuene · non soner relesed.
Haue mercy,' quath Mede · 'on men that hit haunten,
And ich shal keuery ȝoure kirke · and ȝoure cloistre maken,
Bothe wyndowes and wowes · ich wolle a-menden and glase,
And do peynten and portreyn · who paide for the makynge
That euery seg shal see, and seye · ich am sustre of ȝoure ordre.'
Ac god to alle good folke · suche grauynge defendeth,
To wryten in wyndowes · of eny wel dedes,
Leste prude be peyntid there · and pompe of the worlde.
For god knoweth thy conscience · and thy kynde wille,

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50. assoiled IFE; soiled P. 51. worcheng P. 57. wile P. 60. wer-of P. 62. relesede P. 64. ich E; i MIFSG; P *om.* churche P. 66. wo P.

And seith, *Nesciat sinistra quid faciat dextera.*
Lete not thi luft hond · late ne rathe,
Beo war what thi riht hond · worcheth or deleth;
Bote parte hit so priueli · that pruide beo not seȝen
Nouther in siht, ne in soule · for god him-self knoweth
Ho is corteis, or kuynde · couetous, or elles.
For-thi I lere ȝou, lordynges · such writynge ȝe leue,
To writen in wyndouwes · of ȝoure wel dedes,
Or to greden aftur godus folk · whon ȝe ȝiuen or doles;
Parauenture ȝe han · oure hure therfore here.
For vr saueour hit seith · and him-seluen precheth,
Amen dico vobis, receperunt mercedem suam;

And thi coste and thi coueitise · and who the catel ouȝte.
For-thi I lere ȝow, lordes · leueth suche werkes,
To writen in wyndowes · of ȝowre wel dedes,
Or to greden after goddis men · whan ȝe delen doles;
An auenture ȝe han ȝowre hire here · and ȝoure heuene als;
Nesciat sinistra quid faciat dextra.
Lat nouȝte thi left half · late ne rathe,
Wyte what thow worchest · with thi riȝt side;
For thus bit the gospel · gode men do here almesse.
Meires and maceres · that menes ben bitwene
The kynge and the comune · to kepe the lawes,
To punyschen on pillories · and pynynge stoles
Brewesteres and bakesteres · bocheres and cokes;
For thise aren men on this molde · that moste harme worcheth
To the pore peple · that parcel-mele buggen.
For they poysoun the peple · priueliche and oft,
Thei rychen thorw regraterye · and rentes hem buggen
With that the pore people · shulde put in here wombe;
For toke thei on trewly · thei tymbred nouȝt so heiȝe,
Ne bouȝte non burgages · be ȝe ful certeyne.

A. 66. *This line is in* H *only.* 72. percel-mel TUD; al schal V.
74. regatorie V. **B.** 73. ne WCR; no LO. **C.** 77. hure (*for* hue) P.

Here forsothe thei fongen · her mede forth-with.
Meires and maistres · and ȝe that beoth mene
Bitwene the kyng and the comuns · to kepe the lawes,
As to punisschen on pillories · or on pynnyng stoles
Brewesters, bakers · bochers and cookes;
For theose be men vppon molde · that most harm worchen,
To the pore people · that percel-mel buggen.
Thei punisschen the peple · priueliche and ofte,
And recheth thorw regratorie · and rentes hem buggeth,
With that the pore people · schulde puten in heore wombe.
For toke thei on trewely · thei timbrede not so hye,
Ne bouȝte none borgages · beo ȝe certeyne.

Thi cost and here couetyse · and who the catel ouhte.
For thy leue lordes loue · leueth suche wrytinges;
God in the gospel · such grauynge noȝt a-loweth,
Nesciat sinistra quid faciat dextera.
Let nat thy lyft half · oure lord techeth,
Ywite what thow delest · with thy ryht syde.
ȝut Mede myldeliche · the meyre hue bysouhte—
Bothe shereues and seriauns · and suche as kepeth lawes
To punyshen on pillories · and on pynyng-stoles,
As bakers and brewers · bouchers and cokes—
(For thees men doth most harme · to the mene puple,
Richen thorw regratrye · and rentes hem byggen
With that the poure puple · sholde putten in hure womben;
For toke they on triweliche · they tymbrid nat so heye,
Nother bouhten hem burgages · be ȝe ful certayn:
Thei haue no pite of the puple · that parcel-mele mote biggen;
Thauh thei take hem vntydy thyng · thei hold hit no treson,
And thauh thei fulle nat ful · that for lawe is seled,
He gripeth ther-for as grete · as for the grete treuthe.
Meny sondry sorwes · in cytees fallen ofte,
Bothe thorw fuyr and flod · and al for false puple,
That by-gylen good men · and greueth hem wrongliche,
The whiche cryen on hure knees · that Crist hem auenge,
Here on thys erthe · other elles on helle,

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83. Whit (*for* With) P. 86. pite MIFE; puteye P. 88. is seled MIFE; y-seelde P. 90. cyte P; citees IFE. 93. wiche P.

Bote Meede the mayden · the meir heo bi-souȝte,
Of alle suche sullers · seluer to taken,
Or presentes withouten pons · as peces of seluer,
Rynges with rubyes · the regratour to fauere.
'For my loue,' quod the ladi · 'loue hem wel vchone,
And soffre hem to sulle · sumdel aȝeyn resoun.'

Ac Mede the mayde · the maire hath bisouȝte,
Of alle suche sellers · syluer to take,
Or presentz with-oute pens · as peces of siluer,
Ringes or other ricchesse · the regrateres to maynetene.
'For my loue,' quod that lady · 'loue hem vchone,
And soffre hem to selle · somdele aȝeins resoun.'
Salamon the sage · a sarmoun he made,
For to amende maires · and men that kepen lawes,
And tolde hem this teme · that I telle thynke;
Ignis deuorabit tabernacula eorum qui libenter accipiunt munera, &c.

B. 95. thynko L. **C.** 96. yueles E; hyueles P. 101. in þe (*for* þe) P. 103. men P; *see* l. 102. 105. ben; *suggested by* beth F; han be M (PEIS *om.*) 108. þynken P. 113. ȝeftes P; *see* l. 117. 114. P *om. 2nd* a. 115. meyere P. 121. hue (*for* he) P. 123. wat P.

Bote Salamon the sage · a sarmoun he made,
To a-mende meires · and men that kepeth the lawe;
And tolde hem this teeme · that I wol telle nouthe:
Ignis deuorabit tabernacula eorum qui libenter accipiunt munera.

That so by-gyleth hem of here good; · and god on hem sendeth
Feueres other fouler yueles · other fur on here houses,
Moreyne other othere meschaunce · and menye tyme hit falleth,
That innocence ys yherde · in heuene a-monge seyntes,
That louten for hem to oure lorde · and to oure lady bothe,
To graunten gylours on erthe · grace to amende,
And haue here penaunce on pure erthe · and noȝt the pyne of helle.
And thenne falleth ther fur · on false menne houses,
And good menne for here gultes · gloweth on fuyr after.
Al thys haue we seyen · that som tyme thorw a brewere
Meny burgagys ben ybrent · and bodyes ther-ynne;
And thorw a candel, clomyng · in a corsed place,
Fel a-doun, and for-brende · forth al the rewe.
For-thy mayres that maken free men · me thynketh that thei ouhten
For to spure and aspye · for eny speche of seluer
What manere mester · other merchaundise he vsede,
Er he were vnder-fonge free · and felawe in ȝoure rolles.
Hit ys noȝt semly forsoth · in cyte ne in borwton,
That vsurers other regratours · for eny kynne ȝyftes,
Be fraunchised for a free man · and haue a fals name)—
Ac Mede the mayde · the meyre hue by-souhte
Of alle suche sellers · suluer to take,
Other presentes with-oute pans · and other pryueye ȝyftes,
And haue reuthe of the regratours · that han ryche hondes;
In quorum manibus iniquitates sunt: dextera eorum repleta est muneribus.
'Loue hem for my loue' · quath this lady Mede,
'And soffre hem som tyme · to sulle a-ȝens the lawe.'
Salamon the sage · a sarmon he made
In amendement of meyres · and othere stywardes,
And witnessyth what worth of hem · that wollen take mede:
Ignis deuorabit tabernacula eorum qui libenter accipiunt munera.

Among this lewede men · this latin amounteth,
That fuir schal falle · and brenne atte laste
The houses and the homes · of hem that desyreth
For to haue ȝiftes · in ȝouthe or in elde.
Now beoth ȝe war, if ȝe wole · ȝe maysturs of the lawe;
For the sothe schale be souȝt of ȝoure soules · so me god helpe,
The suffraunce that ȝe suffre · such wrongus to be wrouȝt;
While the chaunce is in ȝoure choyse · cheose ȝe the best.
The king com from counseyl · and cleped aftur Meede,
And of-sente hire a-swithe · seriauns hire to fette,

Amonge this lettered ledes · this latyn is to mene,
That fyre shal falle, and brenne · al to blo askes
The houses and the homes · of hem that desireth
ȝiftes or ȝeresȝyues · bi-cause of here offices.
The kynge fro conseille cam · and called after Mede,
And ofsent hir alswythe · with seriauntes manye,
That brouȝten hir to bowre · with blisse and with ioye.
Curteisliche the kynge thanne · comsed to telle,
To Mede the mayde · melleth thise wordes:

'Vnwittily, womman! · wrouȝte hastow oft,

Ac worse wrouȝtestow neure · than tho thow Fals toke.
But I forgyue the that gilte · and graunte the my grace;
Hennes to thi deth day · do so namore!

I haue a knyȝte, Conscience · cam late fro biȝunde;
ȝif he wilneth the to wyf · wyltow hym haue?'
'ȝe, lorde,' quod that lady · 'lorde forbede elles!

A. 91–94. *These lines are in* H *only.* 92. souȝte H. 98. *In* H *only.* 100. melis thise TH_2; moueth these U; melodyes (*error for* meleth theose) V. 101. Unwittily ywys T; Certis unwysely H; Qweynteliche, quath the kyng V. 107. lord (2) TUD; god V. **B.** 97. brenne WCO; berne L. 98. that

And brou3te hire to boure · with blisse and with ioye;
With myrthe and with mynstrasye · thei pleseden hir ychoone.
Corteisliche the kyng · cumseth to telle,
To Meede the mayden · meleth theose wordes:
'Unwittily, ywys · wrouht hastou ofte;
Bote worse wrouhtest thou neuere · then whon thou Fals toke.
Ac I for3iue the this gult · and graunte the my grace;
Hennes to thi deth day · do so no more.
Ichaue a kniht hette Concience · com late from bi-3onde,
3if he wilne the to wyf · wolt thou him haue?'
'3e, lord,' quath that ladi · 'lord for-beode hit elles!

A-mong these lettrede lordes · this latyn ys to mene,
That fur shal falle and for-brenne · al to blewe askes
The houses and the homes · of hem that taken 3yftes.
The kynge fram-consail cam · and callyd after Mede,
And sente for to see hure · ac ich say nat hym that ladde hure.
Corteisliche the kyng tho · as hus kynde wolde,
Lackede here a litel wyht · for that hue louede gyle,
And wilnede to be wedded · with-oute hys leue,
Tyl Treuth hadde tolde hure · a tokne fram hymselue;
And seyde, 'womman, vnwittylich · wrou3t hast thow ofte;
Ich haue for-gyue the meny gultes · and my grace graunted
Bothe to the and to thyne · in hope thow sholdest a-mende;
And ay the lenger ich lete the go · the lasse treuthe ys with the;
For worsse wrouhtest thow neuere · than tho thow Fals toke.
3ut ich for-gyue the this gult · godes for-bode eny more
Thow tene me and Treuthe; · and thow mowe be y-take,
In the castel of Corf · ich shal do the close
Ther as an ancre · other in a wel wors wone,
And marre the with myschef · by seint Marye my lady,
That alle wommen wantowen · shulleth be war by the one,
And biterliche banne the · and alle that bereth thy name,
And teche the louye treuthe · and take consail of reson.
Ich haue a kny3t, hatte Conscience · cam late froo by3onde,
Yf he wilneth the to wyue · wolt thow hym haue?'
'3e, lord,' quath the lady · 'lord it me for-bede

WCRO; L *om.* 107. the (2) R; thee WO; L *om.* **C.** 124. these IFMS; thes P. 130. litel EIFM; lyte P. 131. ys (*for* hys) P. 133. wommen (*wrongly*) P. 139. tene me and IMFSG; tuene on P.

Bote ich holde me to oure heste · honge me sone!'
  Thenne was Concience i-clepet · to comen and apeeren
To-fore the kyng and his counsel · clerkes and othure.
Kneolynge Concience · to the kyng loutede,
To wyte what his wille were · and what he do schulde.
  'Woltou wedde this wommon,' quod the kyng · 'ȝif I wol assente?
Heo is fayn of thi felawschupe · for to beo thi make.'
  'Nay,' quath Concience to the kyng · 'Crist hit me forbeode!
Er ich wedde such a wyf · wo me bi-tyde!
  Heo is frele of hire flesch · fikel of hire tonge;
Heo maketh men misdo · moni score tymes;
In trust of hire tresour · teoneth ful monye.

But I be holely at ȝowre heste · lat hange me sone!'
  And thanne was Conscience calde · to come and appiere
Bifor the kynge and his conseille · as clerkes and othere.
Knelynge Conscience · to the kynge louted,
To wite what his wille were · and what he do shulde.
  'Woltow wedde this womman,' quod the kynge · ȝif I wil assente,
For she is fayne of thi felawship · for to be thi make?'
  Quod Conscience to the kynge · 'Cryst it me forbede!
Ar I wedde suche a wyf · wo me bityde!
For she is frele of hir feith · fykel of here speche,
And maketh men mysdo · many score tymes;
Truste of hire tresore · treieth ful manye.
Wyues and widewes · wantounes she techeth,
And lereth hem leccherye · that loueth hire ȝiftes.
ȝowre fadre she felled · thorw fals biheste,
And hath apoysounde popis · and peired holicherche;
Is nauȝt a better baude · bi-hym that me made,
Bitwene heuene and helle · in erthe though men souȝte!
For she is tikil of hire taile · talwis of hir tonge,
As comune as a cartwey · to eche a knaue that walketh,
To monkes, to mynstralles · to meseles in hegges.
Sisoures and sompnoures · suche men hir preiseth;
Shireues of shires · were shent ȝif she nere;

A. 112. *This line is from* H; TUD *have a similar line*; V *omits it.* B. 127. and WRO; L *om.* C. 149. holly IMFS; holiche P. 151. ys P. 154. wol IS; wolle P. 156. for-bude P; *see* l. 148. 160. he (*for* hue) P.

Wyues and widewes · wantounesse heo techeth,
Lereth hem lecherie · that loueth hire ȝiftes;
Vr fader Adam heo falde · with feire biheste;
Apoysende popes · and peyreth holy chirche.
Ther nis no beter baude · (bi him that me made!)
Bitwene heuene and helle · in eorthe thauȝ men souhte.
Heo is tikel of hire tayl · talewys of hire tonge,
As comuyn as the cart-wei · to knaues and to alle;
To preostes, to minstrals · to mesels in hegges.
Sisours and sumpnours · suche men hire preisen;
Schirreues of schires · weore schent ȝif heo nere.

Bote ich be holly at thyn heste; · let honge me ellys!'
Thenne was Conscience cald · to come and apeere
By-for the kyng and hys consail · as clerkus and othere.
Conscience knelynge · to the kyng loutede,
To wite what hus wil were · and what he do sholde.
'Wolt thow wedde this maide · yf ich wol assente,
For hue ys fayne of thy felaushep · and for to be thy make?'
Quath Conscience to the kynge · 'Crist it me for-bede!
Er ich wedde suche a wif · wo me by-tyde!
For hue ys freel of hure faith · and fikel of hure speche,
And maketh men mys-do · meny score tymes.
In trist of hure tresour · hue teneth ful menye;
Wyues and wodewes · wantownesse hue techeth,
And lereth hem to lecherie · that louyeth here ȝyftes.
ȝoure fader hue felde · Fals and hue to-gederes;
Hue hath a-poisoned popes · hue apeireth holy churche;
Ys nauht a betere baude · by hym that me made!
By-twyne heuene and helle · alle erthe thauh me souhte.
For hue ys tykel of hure tail · talewys of tonge,
As comune as the cart-wey · to knaues and to alle,
To monkes and to alle men; · the meseles in heggys
Lyggeth by hure whenne hem lust · lered and lewed.
Sysours and somners · suche men hure preyseth,
Shereues of shires · were shent yf hue ne were.

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teneþ IFME; tueneþ P. 164. a-poisened P. 167. talewys SI; talwys P. 170. wenne P. 172. Shereue P.

Heo doth men leosen heore lond · and heore lyues after,
And leteth passe prisons · and payeth for hem ofte.
Heo ȝeueth the iayler gold · and grotes to-gedere,
To vn-fetere the false · and fleo where hem lyketh.
Heo taketh the trewe bi the top · and tiȝeth him faste,
And hongeth him for hate · that harmede neuere.
Heo that ben curset in constorie · counteth hit not at a russche;
For heo copeth the comissarie · and coteth the clerkes;
Heo is asoyled as sone · as hire-self lyketh.
Heo may as muche do · in a mooneth ones,

For she doth men lese here londe · and here lyf bothe.
She leteth passe prisoneres · and payeth for hem ofte,
And gyueth the gailers golde · and grotes togideres,
To vnfettre the fals · fle where hym lyketh;
And taketh the trewe bi the toppe · and tieth hym faste,
And hangeth hym for hatred · that harme dede neure.
To be cursed in consistorie · she counteth nouȝte a russhe;
For she copeth the comissarie · and coteth his clerkis;
She is assoilled as sone · as hir-self liketh,
And may neiȝe as moche do · in a moneth one,
As ȝowre secret seel · in syx score dayes.
For she is priue with the pope · prouisoures it knoweth,
For sire symonye and hir-selue · seleth hire bulles.
She blesseth thise bisshopes · theiȝe they be lewed,
Prouendreth persones · and prestes meynteneth,
To haue lemmannes and lotebies · alle here lif-dayes,
And bringen forth barnes · aȝein forbode lawes.
There she is wel with the kynge · wo is the rewme,
For she is fauorable to the fals · and fouleth trewthe ofte.
Bi Iesu, with here ieweles · ȝowre iustices she shendeth,
And lith aȝein the lawe · and letteth hym the gate,
That feith may nouȝte haue his forth · here floreines go so thikke.
She ledeth the lawe as hire list · and louedayes maketh,
And doth men lese thorw hire loue · that lawe myȝte wynne,
The mase for a mene man · thouȝ he mote hir eure.
Lawe is so lordeliche · and loth to make ende,

A. 141. ȝoure TH; vre V; the U. were P. 177. takeþ ME; take P.
C. 176. vnfetery E; vnfeterye P. 178. him IMG; P *om.* 179.

As ȝoure secre seal · in seuen score dayes.
Heo is priue with the pope · prouisours hit knowen;
Sir Simonie and hire-self · asselen the bulles;
Heo blessede the bisschopes · thouȝ that thei ben lewed.
Prouendreres, persuns · preostes heo meynteneth,
To holde lemmons and lotebyes · al heor lyf-dayes,
And bringeth forth barnes · aȝeyn forbodene lawes.
Ther heo is wel with the kyng · wo is the reame!
For heo is fauerable to Fals · and fouleth Treuthe ofte.

For hue doth men lese here londe · and here lyf bothe;
Hue leteth passe prisoners · and paieth for hem ofte,
And geueth the gailer gold · and grotes to-gederes,
To vnfetery the false · and fle where hem lyketh;
And taketh trewe by the top · and tieth hem faste,
And hongeth him for haterede · that harmede neuere.
To be corsed in constorye · hue counteth nauht a rusche;
Hue copeth the comissarie · and coteth hus clerkus,
Hue is assoilid thus sone · as hure self lyketh.
Hue may ney as moche do · in a mounthe one
As ȝoure secret seel · in sexscore dayes.
Hue ys priuy with the pope · prouisours it knoweth,
For Symonye and hure-self · seeleth hure bulles.
Hue blesseth thees byshopys · thauh thei be negh lewede,
Hue prouendreth persons · prestes hue menteyneth
To holde lemmanes and lotebyes · al here lif-dayes,
And bryngeth forth barnes · a-ȝens for-boden lawes;
Sunt infelices · quia matres sunt meretrices.
Ther hue ys wel wyth eny kynge · wo ys the reome,
For hue ys fauerable to Fals · that defouleth Treuthe.
By Iesus, with hure iewels · the iustices hue shendeth;
Hue lyth a-ȝen the lawe · and letteth hym the gate,
That faith may nat haue hus forth · hure floreines goth so thycke;
And ledeth the lawe as hure lust · and louedayes maketh,
Thoruh which loueday ys lost · that leaute myȝte wynne,
The mase for a mene man · thauh he mote euere.
The lawe ys so lordlich · and loth to maken ende,

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constarye P. 180. comessarie P. 181. asoilid P. ase P. self SMG; lef P. 188. lemmenes P. 195. may IFMSG; ne may P. 197. wich P. 198. a IMFES; þe P.

Barouns and burgeis · heo bringeth to serwe,
Heo buggeth with heore Iuweles; · vr Iustises heo schendeth.
Heo lihth aȝeyn the lawe · and letteth so faste,
That feith may not han his forth · hir florins gon so thikke.
Heo ledeth the lawe as hire luste · and loue-dayes maketh,
The mase for a mene mon · thauȝ he mote euere.
Lawe is so lordlich · and loth to maken ende,
With-outen presentes or pons · heo pleseth ful fewe.
Clergye an couetise · heo coupleth to-gedere.
This is the lyf of the ladi · vr lord ȝif hire serwe!
And alle that meynteneth hire · myschaunce hem bytide!

With-oute presentz or pens · she pleseth wel fewe.
Barounes and burgeys · she bryngeth in sorwe,
And alle the comune in kare · that coueyten lyue in trewthe;

For clergye and coueitise · she coupleth togideres.
This is the lyf of that lady · now lorde ȝif hir sorwe!
And alle that meynteneth here men · meschaunce hem bityde!
For pore men mowe haue no powere · to pleyne hem thouȝ thei smerte;
Suche a maistre is Mede · amonge men of gode.'
Thanne morned Mede · and mened hire to the kynge,
To haue space to speke · spede if she myȝte.
The kynge graunted hir grace · with a gode wille;
'Excuse the, ȝif thow canst · I can namore seggen,
For Conscience acuseth the · to congey the for euere.'
'Nay, lorde,' quod that lady · 'leueth hym the worse,
Whan ȝe wyten witterly · where the wronge liggeth;
There that myschief is grete · Mede may helpe.
And thow knowest, Conscience · I cam nouȝt to chide,

A. 156. eende V. 160. myschaunce hem bytide HTUD; vr lord ȝif hem care V. 161. the H; V *om.* C. 200. Wit P. 202. P *om. 2nd* in. 207. custemes P. of IMFSE; and P. þe IMFSE; þat P. 211. couetyce P;

For the pore may haue no pouwer · to playne, thauȝ hem smerte,
Such a mayster is Meede · a-mong men of goode.'
Thenne mornede Meede · and menede hire to the kyng
To haue space to speken · spede ȝif heo mihte.
Thenne the kyng graunted hire grace · with a good wille:
'Excuse the, ȝif thou const · I con no more seye;
For Concience hath a-cuiset the · to congeye for euere.'
'Nay, lord,' quath that ladi · 'leef him the worse
Whon ȝe witen witerliche · wher the wrong lihth.
Ther mischef is gret lord · Meede may helpe,
And thou knowest, Concience · I com not to chyde,

With-oute presentes other pans · hue pleseth ful fewe.
Trewe burgeis and bonde · to nauht hue bringeth ofte,
And al the comune in care · and in couetyse;
Religion hue al to-reueth · and out of ruele to lybbe.
Ther nys cite vnder sonne · ne so riche reome
Ther hue ys loued and lete by · that last shal eny while,
With-oute werre other wo · other wicked lawes,
And customes of couetyse · the comune to distruye.
Vnsyttynge Suffraunce · hure suster, and hure-selue
Haue maked al-most · bote Marie the helpe,
That no lond loueth the · and ȝut leest thyn owene.
For Mede hath knyt clerkes · and couetyse to-geders,
That al the wit of this worlde · ys woxen in-to gyle.
Thus this lady ledeth thy londe · now lord ȝeue hure sorwe!
For pore men der nat pleyne · ne here pleinte shewe,
Suche a maister ys Mede · a-mong men of goode.'
Thanne mornede Mede · menyng hure to the kynge,
To haue space to speke · spede yf hue myghte.
The kyng graunted hure grace · with a good wyll;
'Excuse the yf thow canst · ich can no more seggen;
For Conscience acuseth the · to congie the for euere.'
'Nay, lord,' quath that lady · 'leyueth hym the werse,
When ȝe wyten witerliche · in wham the wrong lyggeth.
Ther that myschief ys gret · Mede may helpen.
And that knoweth Conscience · ich cam noȝt to chiden,

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see l. 202. 212. whit P. 213. þy EG; þi IFMS; þys P. 218. wit P. 219. P *om.* the. 222. Wen P. wam P. 223. þat IMSEG; þe P.

Ne to depraue thi persone · with a proud herte.
  Wel thou wost, Concience · (but ȝif thou wolt lyȝe),
Thow hast honged on my nekke · enleue tymes;
And eke i-gripen of my gold · and ȝiuen ther the lykede.
Whi thou wraththest the now · wonder me thinketh!

Ne depraue thi persone · with a proude herte.
Wel thow wost, wernard · but ȝif thow wolt gabbe,
Thow hast hanged on myne half · elleuene tymes,
And also griped my golde · gyue it where the liked;
And whi thow wratthest the now · wonder me thynketh.
ȝit I may as I myȝte · menske the with ȝiftes,
And mayntene thi manhode · more than thow knoweste.
  Ac thow hast famed me foule · bifor the kynge here.
For kulled I neuere no kynge · ne conseilled ther-after,
Ne dede as thow demest · I do it on the kynge!

B. 187. it WRO; LC *om.* **C.** 225. þi FME; þe P. 228. an (*for* and) P. were P. 229. P *om.* the. 235. wer P. 236. P *om.* so. 240. felde IE; feld P. 241. houre P. 243. ys (*for* hys) P; *and in* l. 251. 250. Wer P. 257. ycoronede P.

For ȝit I may as I mihte · menske the with ȝiftes,
And meyntene thi monhede · more then thou knowest,
And thou hast famed me foule · bifore the kyng heere.
For culde I neuere no kyng · ne counseilede ther-after;
Ne dude I neuere as thou dust · I do hit on the kyng!

Ne to depraue thi persone · with a prout herte.
Wel thow wost wyterly · bote yf thow wolle gabbe,
Thow hast hanged on myn hals · elleuen tymes,
And al-so grypen of my gold · and gaf it where the lykede.
Why thow wratthest the now · wonder me thynketh,
ȝut ich may, as ich myghte · menske the with ȝyftes,
And menteyny thy manhod · more than thow knowest.
Ac thow hast famede me foule · by-fore the kynge here;
For culde ich neuere no kyng · ne consailed so to done;
Ac ich saued my-self · and sexty thousand lyues,
Bothe her and elles wher · in alle kynne londes.
Ac thow thy-self sothliche · ho so it segge dorste,
Hast arwed meny hardy men · that hadden wil to fyghte,
To brennen and to bruten · to bete a-doun strengthes.
In the contreis ther the kyng cam · conscience hym lette,
That he ne felde nat hus foes · tho fortune it wolde,
And as hus werdes were ordeined · by wil of oure lorde.
Caytiflyche thow, Conscience · consailedist the kyng leten
In hus enemys honde · hys heritage of Fraunce.
Vnconnyng ys that conscience · a kyngdome to sulle,
That ys conqueryd thorw comune helpe; · a kyngdome other duche
May nat be sold sothly · so meny here part asken
Of folk that fauht ther-fore · and folwed the kynges wil.
The lest lad that longeth to hym · be the lond wonnen,
Loketh after lordshep · other othere large mede,
Wher-by he may as a man · for euere-more lyue after.
And that ys the kynde of a kyng · that conquereth of hys enemyes,
To helpe heyeliche al hus host · othere elles to graunte
Al that hus men mowen wynne · to do ther-myd here beste.
For-thy ich counsayle no kyng · eny counsayle aske
At Conscience, yf he coueyteth · to conquery a reome.
For sholde neuere Conscience · be my constable,
Were ich a kyng ycoroned · by Marye,' quath Mede,
'Ne be mareschal of my men · ther ich moste fyghte.

In Normandie nas he not · a-nuyȝed for my sake;
Ac thou thi-self sothliche · schomedest him there,
Creptest in-to a caban · for colde of thi nayles,
Wendest that wynter · wolde haue last euere,
And dreddest to haue ben ded · for a dim cloude,
And hastedest hamward · for hunger of thi wombe!
Withouten pite, pilour! · pore men thou robbedest,
And beere heor bras on thi bac · to Caleys to sulle.
Ther I lafte with my lord · his lyf forto saue,
Maade him murthe ful muche · mournynge to lete,
Battede hem on the bakkes · to bolden heore hertes,
Dude hem hoppe for hope · to haue me at wille.
Hedde I be marchal of his men · (bi Marie of heuene)!

In Normandye was he nouȝte · noyed for my sake;
Ac thow thi-self sothely · shamedest hym ofte,
Crope in-to a kaban · for colde of thi nailles,
Wendest that wyntre · wolde haue lasted euere,
And draddest to be ded · for a dym cloude,
And hiedest homeward · for hunger of thi wombe.
With-out pite, piloure · pore men thow robbedest,
And bere here bras at thi bakke · to Caleys to selle.
There I lafte with my lorde · his lyf for to saue,
I made his men meri · and mornyng lette.
I batered hem on the bakke · and bolded here hertis,
And dede hem hoppe for hope · to haue me at wille.
Had I ben marschal of his men · (bi Marie of heuene)!
I durst haue leyde my lyf · and no lasse wedde,
He shulde haue be lorde of that londe · a lengthe and a brede,
And also kyng of that kitthe · his kynne for to helpe,
The leste brolle of his blode · a barounes pere!
Cowardliche thow, Conscience · conseiledest hym thennes,
To leuen his lordeship · for a litel siluer,
That is the richest rewme · that reyne ouer houeth!
It bicometh to a kynge · that kepeth a rewme,
To ȝiue mede to men · that mekelich hym serueth,
To alienes and to alle men · to honoure hem with ȝiftes;
Mede maketh hym biloued · and for a man holden.
Emperoures and erlis · and al manere lordes
For ȝiftes han ȝonge men · to renne and to ride.

I durste haue i-leid my lyf · and no lasse wed,
He hedde beo lord of that lond · in lenkthe and in brede;
And eke kyng of that cuththe · his cun for to helpe;
The leeste barn of his blod · a barouns pere.
Sothliche, thou Concience · thou counseildest him thennes,
To leue that lordschupe · for a luitel seluer,
That is the riccheste reame · that reyn ouer houeth!
Hit bicometh for a kyng · that kepeth a reame
To ȝiue meede to men · that mekeliche him seruen;
To aliens, to alle men · to honoure hem with ȝiftes.
Meede maketh him beo bilouet · and for a mon i-holden.
Emperours and eorles · and alle maner lordes
Thorw ȝiftes han ȝonge men · to renne and to ride.

Ac hadde ich, Mede, be hus mareschal · ouer hus men in Fraunce,
Ich dorst haue leid my lyue · and no lasse wedde,
He had be lord of that londe · in lengthe and in brede,
And al-so kyng of that cuth · hus kyn to haue holpen,
The leste brol of hus blod · a barones pere.
Vnkyndely thow, Conscience · consailedest hym thennes,
To lete so hus lordshup · for a lytel moneye.
Hyt by-cometh for a kyng · that shal kepe a reame,
To ȝeue men mede · that meklyche hym serueth,
To alienes, to alle men · to honoury hem with ȝyftes;
Mede maketh hym be by-loued · and for a man yholde.
Emperours and erles · and alle manere lordes
Thoruh ȝiftes hauen ȝemen · to rennen and to ryde.

C. 260. leid MFS; led P. 263. brol F; brolle I; brel P. 267. mecklyche P. 268. ȝeftes P; *see* l. 162. 269. be IEFS; P *om.* yholde ES; yolde P. 271. ȝemen EFS; ȝemmen P.

The pope and his prelates · presentes vnderfongen,
And meedeth men hem-seluen · to meyntene heore lawes.
Seruauns for heore seruise · (ȝe seon wel the sothe),
Taketh meede of heore maystres · as thei mowen a-corde.
Beggers for heore biddyng · biddeth men meede;
Munstrals for heor murthe · meede thei aſken.
The kyng meedeth his men · to maken pees in londe;
Men that knoweth clerkes · meede hem craueth.
Prestes that precheth · the peple to goode
Asketh meede and masse-pons · and heore mete eke.

The pope and alle prelatis · presentz vnderfongen,
And medeth men hem-seluen · to meyntene here lawes.
Seruauntz for her seruise · we seth wel the sothe,
Taken mede of here maistre · as thei mowe acorde.
Beggeres for here biddynge · bidden men mede;
Mynstralles for here murthe · mede thei aske.
The kynge hath mede of his men · to make pees in londe;
Men that teche chyldren · craue of hem mede.
Prestis that precheth the poeple · to gode, asken mede,
And masse-pans and here mete · at the mele-tymes.
Alkynnes crafty men · crauen mede for here prentis;
Marchauntz and mede · mote nede go togideres;
No wiȝte as I wene · with-oute mede may libbe.'
Quod the kynge to Conscience · 'bi Criste! as me thynketh,
Mede is well worthi · the maistrye to haue!'
'Nay,' quod Conscience to the kynge · and kneled to the erthe,
'There aren two manere of medes · my lorde, with ȝowre leue.
That one, god of his grace · graunteth in his blisse
To tho that wel worchen · whil thei ben here.
The prophete precheth ther-of · and put it in the sautere,
Domine quis habitabit in tabernaculo tuo?

A. 212. mede THD; mete V. 219. nede THUD; not V. **B.** 227. Quod WCRO; Quatȝ L. **C.** 283. hue P. 285. Cryest P. 287. P *om.* to þe kyng. 290. lyuen ISG; P *om.* 292. and IF; a PES. 298. whiterly P. wer P.

Alle kunne craftes men · craueth meede for heore prentys;
Meede and marchaundie · mot nede go to-gedere.
Ther may no wiht, as I wene · with-outen meede libbe.'
'Now,' quod the kyng to Concience · 'be Crist, as me thinketh,
Meede is worthi · muche maystrie to haue!'
'Nay,' quod Concience to the kyng · and knelede to grounde;
'Ther beoth twey maner of meedes · my lord, bi thi leue.
That on, good god of his grace · ȝiueth, in his blisse,
To hem that wel worchen · whil that thei ben here.
The prophete hit prechede · and put hit in the psauter,
Qui peccuniam suam non dedit ad vsuram, &c.

The pope and alle prelates · presentes vnder-fongen,
And ȝeuen mede to men · to menteynye here lawes.
Seriauntes for here seruice · mede they asken,
And taken mede of here maistres · as thei mow a-corde.
Beggers and bedmen · crauen mede for here prayers.
Mynstrals for here mynstralcye · a mede thei asken.
Maistres that techen clerkes · crauen hure for mede.
Prestes that prechen · and the puple techen
Asken mede and masse-pans · and here mete bothe.
Alle kyne crafty men · crauen mede for here aprentys,
Marchaundise and mede · mote nedes go to-gederes.
Is no lede that leueth · that he ne loueth mede,
And glad for to grype hure · gret lord other poure.'
Tho quath the kyng to Conscience · 'by Cryst, at my knowynge,
Mede ys worthy, me thynketh · the maistrye to haue.'
'Nay,' quath Conscience to the kyng · 'clerkes wyten the sothe,
That Mede ys euermore · a meyntenour of gyle,
As the sauter sheweth · by suche as ȝeuen mede,
That vnlawfulliche lyuen · hauen large honden,
To ȝeue mede to men · more other lasse.
Ac ther ys mede and mercede · and bothe men demen
A desert for som doynge · derne other elles.
Mede meny tymes · men ȝeuen by-for the doynge;
And that ys nother reson ne ryht · ne no reame lawe
That eny man mede toke · bote he it myghte deserue,
And for to vndertake · to trauely for another,
And wot neuere witterly · wher he lyue so longe,
Ne haue hap to hus hele · mede to deseruen.

Tak no meede, mi lord · of men that beoth trewe;
Loue hem, and leeue hem · for vr lordes loue of heuene;
Godes meede and his merci · ther-with thou maiht winne.
Bote ther is a meede mesureles · that maystrie desyreth,
To meyntene misdoers · meede thei taken;
And therof seith the psauter · in the psalmes ende,
In quorum manibus iniquitates sunt; dextera eorum repleta est muneribus;
That here riȝthond is hepid · ful of ȝeftis,
And heo that gripeth heore ȝiftus · (so me God helpe!)

"Lorde, who shal wonye in thi wones · and with thine holi seyntes,
Or resten on thi holy hilles?" · this asketh Dauid;
And Dauyd assoileth it hym-self · as the sauter telleth,
Qui ingreditur sine macula, et operatur iusticiam,
Tho that entren of o colour · and of on wille,
And han wrouȝte werkis · with riȝte and with reson;
And he that ne vseth nauȝte · the lyf of vsurye,
And enfourmeth pore men · and pursueth treuthe;
Qui pecuniam suam non dedit ad vsuram, et munera super innocentem, &c.
And alle that helpeth the innocent · and halt with the riȝtful,
With-oute mede doth hem gode · and the trewthe helpeth—
Suche manere men, my lorde · shal haue this furst mede
Of god at a grete nede · whan thei gone hennes.
There is an-other mede mesurelees · that maistres desireth;
To meyntene mysdoers · mede thei take;
And there-of seith the sauter · in a salmes ende,
In quorum manibus iniquitates sunt, dextera eorum repleta est muneribus;
And he that gripeth her golde · so me god helpe!
Shal abie it bittere · or the boke lyeth!
Prestes and persones · that plesynge desireth,
That taketh mede and mone · for messes that thei syngeth,
Taketh here mede here · as Mathew vs techeth;
Amen, amen, receperunt mercedem suam.
That laboreres and lowe folke · taketh of her maistres,
It is no manere mede · but a mesurable hire.
In marchandise is no mede · I may it wel a-vowe;
It is a permutacioun apertly · a penyworth for an othre.

Thei schullen a-bugge bitterly · or the bok ly3eth!
Preostes and persones · that plesyng desyreth,
And taketh meede and moneye · for massen that thei syngen,
Schullen han meede in this molde · that Matheu hath i-grauntet;
Amen dico vobis, receperunt mercedem suam.
That laborers and louh folk · taken of heore maystres,
Nis no maner meede · bote mesurable huyre.
In marchaundise nis no meede · I may hit wel avoue;
Hit is a permutacion · a peni for another.

Ich halde hym ouer-hardy · other elles nouht trewe,
That *pre manibus* ys payed · other elles paye asketh.
Harlotes and hores · and al-so fals leches,
Thei asken hure huyre · er they hit haue deserued.
And gylours gyuen by-fore · and goode men at the ende,
When the dede ys ydo · and the day y-endyd.
And that ys no meede · bote a mercede,
A maner dewe dette · for the doynge;
And bote if yt be payed prestliche · the payer is to blame,
As by the bok, that bit · no body to with-holde
The hure of hus hewe · ouer eue til a morwe:
Non morabitur opus mercenarij tui apud te usque mane.
And ther is reson as a reue · rewarding treuthe,
And bothe the lord and the laborer · ben leelliche yserued.

The mede that meny prestes taketh · for masses that thei syngen,
Amen, amen, Matheu seyth · *mercedem suam recipiunt.*
In marchaundise ys no mede · ich may it wel avowe;
Hit is a permutacion a-pertelich · o pene-worth for another.

A. 231. desyret V. 233. eende V. 234. *This line is in* H *only*.
B. 252. *receperunt* O; *recipiebant* LWCR. **C.** 300. ouere P. 303. deseruede P. 307. dewe M; due S; diwe P. 309. wit-holde P. 310. hewe I; hywe P; hyne EFMS. 310. P om. *tui*. 313. prestes ME; prest P.

[*Not in* **A**-*text.*]

[*Not in* **B**-*text.*]

C. 318. P *om.* or. 319. P *om.* and; *see* l. 320. lege P; *see* l. 320. 322. þer-whit P. 323. P *om.* more. 326. erthe EIMFS; þe erthe P. 330. lyue SEI; leue P. 334. eeft P. 335. and IFG; a PEMS. 338. As MS; Ac PEIF. 341. ȝefte P. 342. P om. *nobis.* 344. Wat P. 347. fyndyng IMFSG; a fyndyng PE. 350. P *om.* a.

[*Not in* A-*text.*]

And thauh the kyng of hys cortesye · kaiser, other pope,
ȝeue lond other lordshup · or other large ȝiftes,
To here leele and lyge · loue ys the cause.
And yf the leelle and the lyge · be luther men after,
Bothe kyng and kayser · and the coroned pope
May desauowe that they dude · and douwe ther-with other,
And a-non by-nymen hym hit · and neuere more after
Nother thei ne here ayres · hardy to cleyme,
That kyng other cayser hym gaf · catel other rente.
For god gaf to Salamon · grace vp-on erthe,
Rychesse and reson · whyle he ryht lyuede,
And as sone as god seih · he suwed nouht hus wille,
He reuede hym of hys richesse · and of hus ryht mynde,
And soffrede hym lyue in mysbyleue · ich leyue he be in helle;
So that god geueth no thyng · that synne ne ys the glose.
And so ryght sothliche · may kyng and pope
Bothe gyue and grauntye · ther hus grace liketh,
And eft haue hit a-ȝeyn · of hem that don ille.
Thus ys mede and mercede · as two manere relacions,
Rect and indyrect · rennynge bothe
On a sad and a syker · semblable to hym-selue—
As adiectif and substantyf · vnite asken,
Acordaunce in kynde · in cas and in numbre,
And ayther ys otheres help—· of hem cometh retribucion,
That ys the ȝifte that god ȝyueth · to alle leelle lyuynge,
Grace of good ende · and gret ioye after;
Retribuere dignare, domine deus, omnibus nobis, et cetera.'
Quath the kynge to Conscience · 'knowen ich wolde
What is relacion rect · and indyrect after,
And thanne adiectyf and substantif · for Englisch was it neuere.'
'Relacion rect,' quath Conscience · 'ys a recorde of treuthe,
Quia antelate rei est recordatiuum,
Folwyng and fyndyng out · the foundement of strenthe,
And styuelyche stonde forth · to strengthe of the foundement,
In kynde and in case · and in cours of noumbre;
As a leel laborer · that by-leuyth with hus maistre
In hus paye and in hys pyte · and in hus pure treuthe,
To paye hym yf he performeth · and haue pyte yf he faylleth,

[*Not in* **A**-*text.*]

[*Not in* **B**-*text.*]

C. 355. sustentif P. 356. P *om.* god. 357. triwe P. 358. in ys kynde P. 359. churche P. 361. sennes P. clansede P. 364. whit is P. 366. kyne P. 367. case MF; cause PEISG. to MFG; two PES. 368. wich P. 369. no3t E; nout M; nat FSG; not I; noþer P. 370. for is P. 371. wo P. worliche P. 374. kyne P. 375. kynde P. 376. *This line is in* F *only.* 378. is P. 380. him MFS; hem P.

[*Not in* **A**-*text.*]

And take hym for hus trauaile · al that treuthe wolde.
So of hol herte cometh hope · and hardy relacion
Seketh and suweth · hus substantif sauacion,
That ys god, the grounde of al · a graciouse antecedent.
And man ys relatif rect · yf he be ryht trewe;
He a-cordeth with Crist in kynde · *uerbum caro factum est*;
In case, *credere in ecclesia* · in holy kirke to byleyue;
In numbre, rotie and aryse · and remyssion to haue,
Of oure sory synnes · asoiled and clansed,
And lyue, as oure crede ous kenneth · with Crist withouten ende.
Thus is relacion rect · ryht as adiectif and substantif
A-cordeth in alle kyndes · with his antecedent.
Indirect thyng ys · as ho so coueited
Alle kynne kynde · to knowe and to folwe,
With-oute case to cacche to · and come to bothe numbres;
In which beth good and nat good · and graunte here nothers wil.
That is noȝt reisonable ne rect · to refusy my syres sorname,
Sitth y, his sone and seruaunt · suwe for his ryghte.
For who so wol haue to wyue · my worldliche daughter,
Ich wol feffe hym with hure fayre · and with hure foule taylende.
So indirect thyng ys · inliche to coueyte
To a-corde in alle kyndes · and in alle kynne numbre,
With-oute cost and care · in alle kynne trauaile,
With-oute resoun to rewarde · nauȝt recching of the peple.
Ac relacion rect · is a ryhtful custome,
As, a kyng to cleyme · the comune at his wille
To folwe hym, to fynde hym · and fecche at hem hus consail,
That here loue thus to him · thorw al the londe a-corde.
So comune cleymeth of a kyng · thre kynne thynges,
Lawe, loue, and leaute · and hym lord antecedent,
Bothe here hefd and here kyng · haldyng with no partie,
Bote stande as a stake · that styketh in a muyre
By-twyne two londes · for a trewe marke.
Ac the moste partie of the puple · pure indirect semeth,
For thei wilnen and wolde · as best were for hem-selue,
Thauh the kyng and the comune · al the cost hadde.
Al reson reproueth · such imparfit puple,
And halt hem vnstedefast · for hem lacketh case.

But raddest thou neuer *Regum* · thou recreiȝede meede,
Whi that veniaunce fel · on Saul and his children?
God sende to seie · bi Samuels mouthe,

Ac reddestow neuere *Regum* · thow recrayed Mede,
Whi the veniaunce fel · on Saul and on his children?
God sent to Saul · bi Samuel the prophete,
That Agage of Amaleke · and al his peple aftre
Shulde deye for a dede · that done had here eldres.

A. 244. thou TUD; that VH. **C.** 391. As EIFS; Ac P. 393. peccunie P. 399. no (*for* to) P. 401. churche P. 402. wen P. 403. sike EIG; asky P. fore P. arde P. 408. askyng IMSG; and

That Agag and Amalec · and al his peple aftur,
Schulden dye for a dede . that don hedde his eldren
Aȝeynes Israel and Aaron · and Moyses his brother.

As relatifs indirect · reccheth thei neuere
Of the cours of the case · so they cacche suluer,
Be the pecunie y-payed · thauh parties chide.
He that mede may lacche · maketh litel tale,
Nyme he a numbre · of nobles other of shullenges;
How that clyentes a-corde · mede a-counteth lytel.
Ac adiectif and substantif · ys as ich er tolde,
That ys, vnyte, acordaunce · in case, gendre, and numbre;
And ys to mene in oure mouth · more ne mynne,
Bote that alle manere men · wommen, and children,
Sholde conformye to on kynde · on holy kirke to by-leyue,
And coueite the case · when thei couthe vnderstonde,
To sike for hure synnes · and suffre harde penaunce,
For that ilke lordes loue · that for oure loue deyde,
And coueited oure kynde · and be cald in oure name,
Deus homo,
And nymen hym into oure numbre · now and euere more;
Qui in caritate manet in deo manet, et deus in eo.
Thus is man and mankynde · in manere of a substantif,
As *hic et hec homo* · askyng an adiectif
Of thre trewe termysons · *trinitas unus deus;*
Nominativo, pater et filius et spiritus sanctus.
Ac ho so rat of *Regum* · rede me may of mede,
Hou hue Absolon · to hongynge brouhte;
And sitthe, for Saul · sauede a kyng for mede
A-geyn godes comaundement · god toke suche veniaunce,
That Saul for that synne · and hus sone deyde,
And gaf the kyngdome to hus knaue · that kept sheep and lambren:
As men rat in *Regum* · after Ruth, of kynges,
Hou god sente to Saul · by Samuel the prophete,
That Agag of Amalek · and al hus lyge puple
Sholde deye delfulliche · for dedes of here eldren.

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a kyng P. 409. trywe P. 416. As IMFG; And P. þat (*for* rat) P; *see* l. 410. Ruth I; reweþ P.

Samuel seide to Saul · God sendeth the and hoteth
To beo boxum and boun · his biddyng to worche;
'Wend thider with thin host · wymmen to culle,
Children and cheorles · chop hem to dethe,
Loke thow culle the kyng · coueyte not his goodes
For milions of moneye; · morther hem vchone.
Bernes and beestes · brenne hem al to askes.'
And for he culde not the kyng · as Crist him-self hihte,
Coueytede feir catel · and culde not his beestes,

'For-thi,' seid Samuel to Saul · 'god hym-self hoteth
The, be boxome at his biddynge · his wille to fulfille:
Wende to Amalec with thyn oste · and what thow fyndest there,
slee it;
Biernes and bestes · brenne hem to ded;
Wydwes and wyues · wommen and children,
Moebles and vnmoebles · and al that thow myȝte fynde,
Brenne it, bere it nouȝte awey · be it neuere so riche,
For mede ne for mone; · loke thow destruye it,
Spille it and spare it nouȝte · thow shalt spede the bettere.'
And for he ꝯoueyted her catel · and the kynge spared,
Forbare hym and his bestes bothe · as the bible witnesseth,
Otherwyse than he was · warned of the prophete,
God seide to Samuel · that Saul shulde deye,
And al his sede for that synne · shenfullich ende.
Such a myschief mede made · Saul the kynge to haue,
That god hated hym for euere · and alle his eyres after.
The *culorum* of this cas · kepe I nouȝte to shewe;
An auenture it noyed men · none ende wil I make.
For so is this worlde went · with hem that han powere,
That who-so seyth hem sothes · is sonnest yblamed.
I Conscience knowe this · for kynde witt me it tauȝte,
That resoun shal regne · and rewmes gouerne;
And riȝte as Agag hadde · happe shul somme.
Samuel shal sleen hym · and Saul shal be blamed,
And Dauid shal be diademed · and daunten hem alle,

A. 250. seendeth V. 252. Weend V. 258. *Read* culde; kilde TUD; slouh V; slow H. 260. Saul THUD; Samuel V. 264. clause TH_2; VHU *om.* 265. *Read* nuyȝed; noiȝide T; noiede U; noyed D; *miswritten*

Bote brouhte with him the beestes · as the bible telleth,
God sende to seye · that Saul schulde dye,
And al his seed for that sunne · schendfulliche ende.
Such a mischef meede · made the kyng to haue,
That god hatede him euere · and his heires after.
The *culorum* of this clause · kepe I not to schewe,
In auenture hit nuyȝed me · an ende wol I make:
And riht as Agag hedde · hapne schulle summe;
Samuel schal slen him · and Saul schal be blamed,
Dauid schal ben dyademed · and daunten hem alle,

'Saul,' quath Samuel · 'god hym-self hoteth
To be boxome at my bidding · hus bone to fulfylle.
Haste the with al thyn ost · to the lond of Amalek,
And al that lyueth in that londe · oure lord wol that thow slee hit,
Man, woman, and wif · child, widowe , and bestes;
Mebles and vnmebles · man and alle thynges,
Bren hit, ber nouht away · be hit neuere so riche,
For eny mede of moneye · al that thow myght spille;
Spar hit nat and thow · shalt spede the betere.'
And for he coueited hyre catel · and the kyng spared,
For-bar hym and hus beste bestes · as the byble witnesseth,
Otherwise than god wolde · by warnyng of the prophete,
God seide to Samuel · that Saul sholde deye,
And al hus for that synne · and shendfulliche ende.
Thus was kyng Saul ouercome · for couetyse of mede,
That god hatid hym for euere · and alle hus ayres after.
The *culorum* of this cas · kepe ich nat to shewe,
An aunter hit nuyede me · non ende wol ich make.
For so ys the worlde went · with hem that han the power,
That he that seith most sothest · sonnest ys y-blamed.
Ich Conscience knowe this · for kynde witt me tauhte,
That reson shal regne · and reames gouerne,
And ryht as Agag hadde · happen shulleth somme.
Samuel shal sle hym · and Saul shal be blamed,
And Dauid shal be diademyd · and daunten alle oure enemyes,

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munged V. 267. blamet V. C. 424. P *omits this line; it is from* IMFSG. 430. whitnesseþ P. 438. hem IMFG; P *om.* 444. ande P.

And on Cristene kyng · kepen vs vchone.
Concience knoweth this; · for kuynde wit me tauȝte
That resun schal regne · and reames gouerne;
Schal no more Meede · be mayster vppon eorthe,
Bote loue and louhnesse · and leute to-gedere.
And heo that trespasseth to trouthe · or doth aȝeyn his wille,
Leute schal don him lawe · or leosen his lyf elles.

And one Cristene kynge · kepen hem alle.
Shal na more Mede · be maistre, as she is nouthe,
Ac loue and lowenesse · and lewte togederes,
Thise shul be maistres on molde · treuthe to saue.
And who-so trespasseth ayein treuthe · or taketh aȝein his wille,
Leute shal don hym lawe · and no lyf elles.
Shal no seriaunt for here seruyse · were a silke howue,
Ne no pelure in his cloke · for pledyng atte barre.
Mede of mys-doeres · maketh many lordes,
And ouer lordes lawes · reuleth the rewmes.
Ac kynde loue shal come ȝit · and conscience togideres,
And make of lawe a laborere · suche loue shal arise,
And such a pees amonge the peple · and a perfit trewthe,
That Iewes shal wene in here witte · and waxen wonder glade,
That Moises or Messie · be come in-to this erthe,
And haue wonder in here hertis · that men beth so trewe.
Alle that bereth baslarde · brode swerde or launce,
Axe other hachet · or eny wepne ellis,
Shal be demed to the deth · but if he do it smythye
In-to sikul or to sithe · to schare or to kulter;
Conflabunt gladios suos in vomeres, &c.;
Eche man to pleye with a plow · pykoys or spade,
Spynne, or sprede donge · or spille hym-self with sleuthe.
Prestes and persones · with *placebo* to hunte,
And dyngen vpon Dauid · eche a day til eue.
Huntynge or haukynge · if any of hem vse,
His boste of his benefys · worth bynome hym after.
Shal neither kynge ne knyȝte · constable ne meire
Ouer-lede the comune · ne to the courte sompne,
Ne put hem in panel · to don hem pliȝte here treuthe,
But after the dede that is don · one dome shal rewarde,

A. 280. Vnkuyndeesse (*sic*) V. 281. Ac TUD; But H; And V.

Schal no seriaunt for that seruise · were a selk houue,
Ne no ray robe · with riche pelure.
Meede of misdoers · maketh men so riche,
That lawe is lord i-waxen · and leute is pore.
Vnkuyndenesse is comaundour · and kuyndenesse is banescht.
Ac kuynde wit schal come ȝit . and concience to-gedere,
And make of lawe a laborer · such loue schal aryse!'

And on Cristene kyng · kepen ows echone.
Shal no Mede be maister · neuere more after,
Ac loue and louhnesse · and leaute to-gederes
Shullen be maistres on molde · trewe men to helpe;
And ho so taketh aȝen treuthe · other transuerseth aȝens reson,
Leaute shal do hym lawe · and no lif elles.
Shal no seriaunte for that seruyse · were a selk houe,
Ne pelour in hus paueylon · for pledyng at the barre.
Muchel yuel is thorw mede · meny tyme suffred,
And letteth the lawe · thorw here large ȝyftes.
Ac kynde loue shal come ȝut · and conscience to-gederes,
And make of lawe a laborer · suche loue shal aryse,
And such pees among the puple · and a parfyt treuthe,
That Iewes shal wene in here witt · and wexe so glade,
That here kyng be ycome · fro the court of heuene,
Moyses other Messias · that men be so trewe.
For alle that bereth baselardes · bryght swerde, other launce,
Axe, other acchett · other eny kynne wepne,
Shal be demed to the deth · bote yf he do hit smythie
In-to sykel other into sithe · to shar other to culter;
Conflabunt gladios suos in uomeres, et lanceas suas in falces;
Ech man to pleye with a plouh · a pycoyse other a spade,
Spynnen, and spek of god · and spille no tyme:
Prestes and persons · *placebo* and *dirige*,
Here sauter and here seuene psalmis · for alle synful preyen.
Haukyng other hontyng · yf eny of hem hit vsie,
Shal lese ther-fore hus lyue-lode · and hus lif parauenture.
Shal nother kyng ne knyȝt · constable ne meyre
Ouer-cark the comune · ne to the court sompne,
Ne putte men in panell · ne do men plighte here treuthe;
Bote after the dede that ys ydo · the dome shal recorde,

B. 304. orther L. C. 446. P. *om.* be maister.

[*Not in* **A**-*text.*]

Mercy or no mercy · as treuthe wil acorde.
Kynges courte and comune courte · consistorie and chapitele,
Al shal be but one courte · and one baroun be iustice;
Thanne worth Trewe-tonge, a tidy man · that tened me neuere.
Batailles shal non be · ne no man bere wepne,
And what smyth that ony smytheth · be smyte therwith to dethe,
Non leuabit gens contra gentem gladium, &c.
And er this fortune falle · fynde men shal the worste,
By syx sonnes and a schippe · and half a shef of arwes;
And the myddel of a mone · shal make the Iewes to torne,
And saracenes for that siȝte · shulle synge *gloria in excelsis, &c.*,
For Makomet and Mede · myshappe shal that tyme;
For, *melius est bonum nomen quam diuicie multe.*'
Also wroth as the wynde · wex Mede in a while,
'I can no Latyn,' quod she · 'clerkis wote the sothe.
Se what Salamon seith · in Sapience bokes,
That hij that ȝiueth ȝiftes · the victorie wynneth,
And moche worschip had ther-with · as holiwryt telleth,
Honorem adquiret qui dat munera, &c.'
'I leue wel, lady,' quod Conscience · 'that thi Latyne be trewe;
Ac thow art like a lady · that redde a lessoun ones,
Was, *omnia probate* · and that plesed here herte,
For that lyne was no lenger · atte leues ende.
Had she loked that other half · and the lef torned,
She shulde haue founden fele wordis · folwyng therafter,
Quod bonum est tenete · treuthe that texte made!
And so ferde ȝe, madame! · ȝe couthe namore fynde,
Tho ȝe loked on Sapience · sittynge in ȝoure studie.
This tixte that ȝe han tolde · were gode for lordes,
Ac ȝow failled a cunnyng clerke · that couthe the lef haue torned!
And if ȝe seche Sapience eft · fynde shal ȝe that folweth,
A ful teneful tixte · to hem that taketh mede,
And that is, *animam autem aufert · accipientium, &c.:*
And that is the taille of the tixte · of that that ȝe schewed,
That theiȝe we wynne worschip · and with mede haue victorie,
The soule that the sonde taketh · bi so moche is bounde.'

B. 322. smytheth WO; smithie R; smyteth LC. 337, 338. she WC; sche RO; ȝe L. **C.** 478. tydy ISG; trewe P. tenede EG; tened IFM;

[*Not in* **A**-*text.*]

Mercy other no mercy · as most trewe a-corden.
Kynges court and comune court · constorie and chapitre,
Al shal be bote on court · and on berne be Iustice;
That worth Trewe-tunge, a tydy man · that tenede me neuere.
Batailles shulle neuere eft be · ne man bere eg-tool,
And yf eny man smythie hit · be smyte ther-with to dethe;
Non leuabit gens contra gentem gladium, nec excercebuntur ultra ad prelium.
Ac er this fortune by-falle · fynde me shal the worste,
By syx sonnes and a ship · and half a shef of arwes.
And the myddell of a mone · shal makye the Iewes turne,
And sarasyns for that syght · shullen synge *credo in spiritum sanctum.*
For Makamed and Mede · shullen myshappen that tyme,
For *melius est bonum nomen quam diuicie multe.*'
As wroth as the wynd · wex Mede ther-after—
'Lo what Salamon seith,' quath hue · 'in Sapience the byble,
"That ȝeueth ȝyftes, take ȝeme · the victorie he wynneth,
And moche worshep ther-with" · as holy writt telleth:
Honorem acquirit qui dat munera.'
'Ich leue the, lady,' quath Conscience · 'for that Latyn is trewe:
Thow art lyke a lady · that a lesson radde,
Was, *omnia probate* · that plesed hure herte;
That leef was no lengere · and at the leues ende.
Ac hadde hue loked on the lift half · and the leef turned,
Hue sholde haue yfounde folwynge · fele wordes after,
Quod bonum est tenete · a tyxte of treuthes makyng.
So he that secheth Sapience · fynde he shal that folweth
Tristilich a teneful tixt · to hem that taketh mede,
The whiche hatte, (as ich haue rad · and other that conne rede,)
Animam aufert accipientium:
"Worshup he wynneth · that wol ȝeue mede,
Ac he that receyueth other receteth hure · ys recettor of gyle."'

Hic explicit passus quartus.

teunede P. 480. smyþen P; *see* l. 463. 482. shup P. 484. saresyns P. 486. waxe P. 490. leyue P. for—trewe IMFSG; as holy wriȝt telleth P. 491. ert P. 492. þat IMFSG; wiche P. 493. leef IFSG; P *om.* 498. teneful ISE; tuenful P. 500. hue (*for* he) P.

PASSUS IV.

Passus Quartus de Visione.

'SESETH,' seide the kyng · 'I suffre ȝou no more.
ȝe schulle sauȝtene forsothe · and serue me bothe.
Cusse hire,' quath the kyng · 'Concience, ich hote.'
'Nay, be Crist,' quod Concience · 'congeye me rather!
Bote Reson rede me ther-to · arst wol I dye!'

PASSUS IV.

Passus quartus de visione, vt supra.

'CESSETH,' seith the kynge · 'I suffre ȝow no lengere.
ȝe shal sauȝtne for sothe · and serue me bothe.
Kisse hir,' quod the kynge · 'Conscience, I hote.'
'Nay, bi Criste,' quod Conscience · 'congeye me for euere!
But Resoun rede me ther-to · rather wil I deye!'
'And I comaunde the,' quod the kynge · to Conscience thanne,
'Rape the to ride · and Resoun thow fecche;
Comaunde hym that he come · my conseille to here.
For he shal reule my rewme · and rede me the beste,
And acounte with the, Conscience · so me Cryst helpe,
How thow lernest the peple · the lered and the lewede.'
'I am fayne of that forwarde' · seyde the freke thanne,
And ritt riȝte to Resoun · and rowneth in his ere,
And seide as the kynge badde · and sithen toke his leue.
'I shal arraye me to ride,' quod Resoun · 'reste the a while'—
And called Catoun his knaue · curteise of speche,
And also Tomme Trewe-tonge- · telle-me-no-tales-
Ne-lesyng-to-lawȝe-of- · for-I-loued-hem-neuere—

A. 11. Crist T; god VHUD. 14. Reson THUD; Concience V.

'And I comaunde the,' quod the kyng · to Concience thenne,
'That thou rape the to ride · and Reson thou fette;
Comaunde him that he come · my counseil to here.
For he schal reule my reame · and rede me the beste
Of Meede, and of other mo · and what mon schal hir wedde;
And a-counte with Concience · so me Crist helpe!
How thou ledest my peple · lered and lewed.'
'I am fayn of that foreward' · seide the freike thenne,
And rod riht to Reson · and rouned in his ere,
Seyde as the kyng sende · and seththe tok his leue.
'I schal araye me to ride,' quod Reson · 'reste the a while'—
And clepte Caton his knaue · curteis of speche—

PASSUS V.

Incipit passus quintus.

'CESSETH,' saide the kyng · 'ich soffre 3ow no lenger;
3e shulleth sauhtne for sothe · and serue me bothe.
Kus hure,' quath the kyng · 'Conscience, ich hote.'
'Nay, by Crist,' quath Conscience · 'conge me rather!
Bote Reson rede me ther-to · rather wol ich deye.'
'And ich comaunde,' quath the kynge · to Conscience thenne,
'Rape the to ryde · and Reson that thow fecche;
Comaunde hym that he come · my consail to hure,
For he shal rulye my reame · and rede me the beste,
Of Mede and of other mo · and what man shal hure wedde,
And a-counte with the, Conscience · so me Crist helpe,
How thow ledest my puple · lered and lewede.'
'Ich am fayn of that forwarde · in fayth,' tho quath Conscience,
And rod forth to Reson · and rouned in hus ere,
And seide hym as the kyng saide · and sitthe tok hus leue.
'Ich shal a-raye me to ryde,' quath Reson · 'rest thow a whyle:'—
And called Caton hus knaue · corteys of speche,
And al-so Tomme Trewe-tonge- · telle-me-no-tales-
Ne-lesynges-to-lauhen-of- · for-ich-louede-hit-neuere—

C. 7. Rape IMFSE; Rappe P. 16. wyle P. 18. no MIFS; none P. 19. lesenges P.

'Sette my sadel vppon Soffre- · til-I-seo-my-tyme,
And loke thou warroke him wel · with swithe feole gurthhes;
Hong on him an heui bridel · to bere his hed lowe,
3it wol he make moni a whi · er he come there.'
Thenne Concience on his capul · carieth forth faste,
And Resun with him rideth · rappynge swithe;
Bote on a wayn Witty · and Wisdame i-feere

'And sette my sadel vppon Suffre- · til-I-se-my-tyme,
And lete warrok it wel · with Witty-wordes gerthes,
And hange on hym the heuy brydel · to holde his hed lowe,
For he wil make wehe · tweye er he be there.'
Thanne Conscience vppon his caple · kaireth forth faste,
And Resoun with hym rit · rownynge togideres,
Whiche maistries Mede · maketh on this erthe.
One Waryn Wisdom · and Witty his fere
Folwed hem faste · for thei haued to done
In the cheker and at the chauncerie · to be discharged of thinges;
And riden fast, for Resoun · shulde rede hem the beste,
For to saue hem, for siluer · fro shame and fram harmes.
And Conscience knewe hem wel · thei loued coueitise,
And bad Resoun ride faste · and recche of her noither,
'There aren wiles in here wordes · and with Mede thei dwelleth;
There as wratthe and wranglyng is · there wynne thei siluer,
Ac there is loue and lewte · thei wil nou3te come there;
Contricio et infelicitas in vijs eorum, &c.
Thei ne gyueth nou3te of god · one gose wynge,
Non est timor dei ante oculos eorum.
For, wot god, thei wolde do more · for a dozeine chickenes,
Or as many capones · or for a seem of otes,
Than for loue of owre lorde · or alle hise leue seyntes.
For-thi, Resoun, lete hem ride · tho riche, bi hem-seluen,
For Conscience knoweth hem nou3te · ne Cryst, as I trowe.'
And thanne Resoun rode faste · the ri3te hei3e gate,
As Conscience hym kenned · til thei come to the kynge.
Curteisliche the kynge thanne · come a3ein Resoun,
And bitwene hym-self and his sone · sette hym on benche,

A. 24. witty TH; wytty U; wyd V. **B.** 24. rit RO; rydes C; ritte L. 27. for thei WOB; L *om.* **C.** 21. worrok P. P *om.* the. 22. his

Folweden hem faste · for thei hedden to done
In esscheker and chauncelrie · to ben descharget of thinges;
And riden faste, for Reson · schulde reden hem the beste
For to sauen hem-self · from schome and from harme.
Bote Concience com arst · to court bi a myle,
And romede forth bi Reson · riht to the kyng.
Corteisliche the kyng · thenne com to Resoun,
Bitwene himself and his sone · sette him on benche,

'And sette my sadel vppon Soffre- · til-ich-see-my-tyme,
Let warroke hym wel · with Avyse-the-by-fore,
For it is the wone of Wil · to wynse and to kyke;
Let peitrel hym and pole hym · with peyntede wittes.'
Thenne Conscience on hus capel · comsed to prykie,
And Reson with hym ry3t · rounyng to-geders
Which a maister Mede was · a-mong poure and riche.
Then Waryn Wysman · and Wyly-man his felawe
Fayn were to folwen hem · and fast ryden after,
To take red at Reson · that recorde sholde
By-fore the kyng and Conscience · yf thei couthen pleyne
On Wily-man and Wittiman · and Waryn Wrynge-lawe.
Ac Conscience knew hem wel · and carped to Reson:
'Here cometh,' quath Conscience · 'that couetyse seruen;
Ryd forth, syre Reson · and recche nat of here tales,
For ther wratthe and wranglyng ys · ther thei wolle a-byde;
Ac ther loue and leaute ys · hit lyketh nat here hertes:
Contricio et infelicitas in uiis eorum, et uiam pacis non cognouerunt; non est timor dei ante oculos eorum.
Thei geueth no3t of good faith · god wot the sothe;
Thei wolde don for a dyner · other for a dosene capones
More than for oure lordes loue · other oure lady hus moder.'

Thanne Reson rod forth · and tok reward of no man,
And dude as Conscience kenned · til he the kyng mette.
Corteslich the kyng then · cam and grette Reson,
And by-twene hymself and his sone · sette tho syre Reson,

(*for* is) P. 26. Wich P. 27. wily IFSE; wyle P. 31. williman P. 43. self IM; PEFS *om.* is P.

And wordeden a gret while · wysliche to-gedere.
Thene Pees com to parlement · and put vp a bille,
Hou that Wrong aȝeyn his wille · his wyf hedde i-take,
And hou he rauischede Rose · Reynaldes lemmon,
And Mergrete of hire maydenhod · maugre hire chekes.
'Bothe my gees and my grys · his gadelynges fetten;
I dar not for dreede of hem · fihte ne chide.
He borwede of me bayȝard · and brouhte him neuer aȝeyn,
Ne no ferthing him fore · for nouȝt that I con plede.
He meynteneth his men · to morthere myn owne,

And wordeden wel wyseli · a gret while togideres.
And thanne come Pees in-to parlement · and put forth a bille,
How Wronge aȝeines his wille · had his wyf taken,
And how he rauisshed Rose · Reginoldes loue,
And Margarete of hir maydenhode · maugre here chekis.
'Bothe my gees and my grys · his gadelynges feccheth;
I dar nouȝte for fere of hym · fyȝte ne chyde.

He borwed of me bayard · he brouȝte hym home neure,
Ne no ferthynge ther-fore · for nauȝte I couthe plede.
He meyneteneth his men · to morther myne hewen,
Forstalleth my feyres · and fiȝteth in my chepynge,
And breketh vp my bernes dore · and bereth aweye my whete,
And taketh me but a taile · for ten quarteres of otes,
And ȝet he bet me ther-to · and lyth bi my mayde,
I nam nouȝte hardy for hym · vneth to loke.'
The kynge knewe he seide sothe · for Conscience hym tolde,
That Wronge was a wikked luft · and wrouȝte moche sorwe.
Wronge was afered thanne · and Wisdome he souȝte
To make pees with his pens · and profered hym manye,
And seide, 'had I loue of my lorde thy kynge · litel wolde I recche,
Theiȝe Pees and his powere · pleyned hym eure!'

A. 36. hou THUD; V *om.* 38. his THUD; the V. C. 44. wile P. 47. rauysede P. 49. gees IMEG ;. goos P. 52. wanne P. seluer MG ;

Forstalleth my feire · fihteth in my chepynges,
Breketh vp my berne-dore · and bereth awei my whete,
And taketh me bote a tayle · of ten quarter oten;
And ȝit he bat me therto · and liȝth be my mayden.
I nam not so hardi for him · vp for to loke.'
The kyng kneuh he seide sooth · for Concience him tolde.
Wrong was a-fert tho · and Wisdam souhte
To make his pees with pons · and proferde forth moneye,
And seide, 'Hedde I loue of the kyng · luite wolde I recche
Thauh Pees and his pouwer · playneden on me euere!'

And speken tho wise wordes · a long while to-gederes.
Thenne cam Pees in-to parlement · and putte vp a bylle,
How that Wrong wilffullich · hadde hus wif for-leyen,
And how he rauyschede Rose · the riche wydewe, by nyghte,
And Margarete of here maidenhod · as he mette hure late.
'Bothe my gees and my grys · and my gras he taketh,
Ich dar nouht for his felaweshepe · in faith,' Pees seide,
'Bere sikerlich eny seluer · to seint Gyles doune;
He waiteth ful wel · whanne ich seluer take,
What wey ich wende · wel ȝerne he aspieth,
To robbe me and to ryfle me · yf ich ryde softe.
ȝut he is bold for to borwe · and baddelich he payeth;
He borwede of me bayarde · and browte hym hom neuere,
Ne no ferthyng ther-fore · for nouht ich couthe plede.
He menteyneth hus men · to morthre myn hewes,
And for-stalleth myn faires · and fyghteth in my chepynges,
And breketh vp my bernes dore · and bereth away my whete,
And taketh me bote a taile · for ten quarters other twelue.
ȝut he manasceth me and myne · and lyth by my mayde,
Ich am nouht hardy for hym · vnnethe to loke.'
The kyng knew that he seide soth · for Conscience hym tolde,
How Wronge was a wickede man · and moche wo wrouhte.
Tho was Wrong a-fered · Wysdome he by-souhte;
On men of lawe Wrong lokede · and largelich hem profrede,
And for to haue of here help · handy-dandy payede.
'Had ich loue of the lorde · litel wolde ich recche
Of Pees and of hus power · thauh he pleynede euere!'

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sulfere P. 56. P *om.* hom. 58. hywes P. 60. breke P. wete P. 63. owneþe P.

Wisdam wente tho · and so dude Wit,
And for Wrong hedde i-do · so wikked a dede;
And warnede Wrong tho · with such a wys tale;
'Whose worcheth bi wil · wraththe maketh ofte;
I sigge hit bi thi-seluen · thou schalt hit sone fynde.
Bote ȝif Meede make hit · thi mischef is vppe,
For bothe thi lyf and thi lond · liȝth in the kynges grace.'
Wrong thenne vppon Wisdom · wepte to helpe,
Him for his handidandi · rediliche he payede.
Thene Wisdam and Wit · wente to-gedere,
And nomen Meede with hem · merci to wynne.
Pees putte forth his hed · and his ponne blodi:
'Withouten gult, god wot · gat I this scathe.'

Tho wan Wisdome · and sire Waryn the witty,
For that Wronge had ywrouȝt · so wikked a dede,
And warned Wronge tho · with such a wyse tale;
'Who-so worcheth bi wille · wratthe maketh ofte;
I seye it bi thi-self · thow shalt it wel fynde.
But if Mede it make · thi myschief is vppe,
For bothe thi lyf and thy londe · lyth in his grace.'
Thanne wowed Wronge · Wisdome ful ȝerne,
To make his pees with his pens · handi-dandi payed.
Wisdome and Witte thanne · wenten togideres,
And toke Mede myd hem · mercy to winne.
Pees put forth his hed · and his panne blody;
'Wyth-outen gilte, god it wote · gat I this skathe,
Conscience and the comune · knowen the sothe.'
Ac Wisdom and Witt · were about faste
To ouercome the kyng · with catel, ȝif thei myȝte.
The kynge swore, by Crist · and by his crowne bothe,
That Wronge for his werkis · sholde wo tholye,
And comaunded a constable · to casten hym in yrens,
'And late hym nouȝte this seuene ȝere · seen his feet ones.'
'God wot,' quod Wysdom · 'that were nauȝte the beste;
And he amendes mowe make · late meynprise hym haue;
And be borwgh for his bale · and biggen hym bote,
And so amende that is mysdo · and euermore the bettere.'
Witt acorded ther-with · and seide the same:

A. 60. Wrog V. 69. catel TUD; meede VH. B. 68. ywrouȝte L.

Concience and the kyng · knewen the sothe;
Wusten wel that Wrong · was a schrewe euere.
But Wisdam and Wit · weoren ȝeorne aboute faste
To ouercome the kyng . with catel ȝif heo mihten.
The kyng swor tho bi Crist · and bi his coroune bothe,
That Wrong for his werkes · schulde wo thole,
And comaundede a constable · to casten him in irens;
'He ne schal this seuen ȝer · seon his feet ones.'
'God wot,' quath Wisdam · 'that weore not the beste;
And he amendes make · let meynprise him haue;
And beo borw of his bale · and buggen him bote,
And a-menden his misdede . and euer-more the bettre.'
Wit a-cordede herwith · and seide him the same:

Thoruh Wrong and hus werkes · ther was Mede yknowe,
For Wysdome and Wit tho · wenten to-gederes,
And toke Mede myd hem · mercy to wynne.
ȝut Pees putte forth hus hefd · and hus panne blody,
'With-oute gult, god wot · gat ich thys scathe;
Conscience knoweth hit wel · and alle the trewe comune.'
Ac Wyles and Wit · weren a-boute faste
To ouercome the kynge · thorw catel, yf thei myghte.
The kyng swor tho by Crist · and by his corone bothe,
That Wrong for hus workus · sholde wo tholie,
And comaundede a constable · to caste Wrong in yrenes,
Ther he ne sholde in seuen ȝere · see fet ne hondes.
'God wot,' quath a wis on · 'that were nat the beste;
Yf he may amendes do · let meynpryse hym haue,
And be borw of hys bale · and byggen hym bote,
And a-mende that ys mys-do · and euere-more the betere.'
Wit a-corded her-with · and witnessede the same;

C. 78. þorw *is miswritten* þow *in* P. 85. ys P.

'Hit is betere that boote · bale a-doun bringe
Then bale be beten · and boote neuer the better.'
  Thenne Meede meokede hire · and merci bi-souhte,
And profrede Pees a present · al of pure red gold:
'Haue this of me,' quod heo · 'to amende with thi scathe,
For ichul wage for Wrong · he wol do so no more.'
  Pees thenne pitously · preyede the kyng
To haue merci on that mon · that mis-dude him ofte:
'For he hath waget me a-mendes · as Wisdam him tauhte,
I forʒiue him that gult · with a good wille;
So that ʒe assented beo · I con no more sigge;
For Meede hath maad me amendes · I may no more aske.'

'Bettere is that bote · bale adoun brynge,
Than bale be ybette · and bote neuere the bettere.'
  And thanne gan Mede to mengen here · and mercy she bisought,
And profred Pees a present · al of pure golde:
'Haue this, man, of me,' quod she · 'to amende thi skathe,
For I wil wage for Wronge · he wil do so namore.'
  Pitously Pees thanne · prayed to the kynge
To haue mercy on that man · that mys-did hym so ofte:
'For he hath waged me wel · as Wysdome hym tauʒte,
And I forgyue hym that gilte · with a goode wille;
So that the kynge assent · I can seye no bettere;
For Mede hath made me amendes · I may namore axe.'
  'Nay,' quod the kynge tho · 'so me Cryst helpe!
Wronge wendeth nouʒte so awaye · arst wil I wite more;
For loupe he so liʒtly · laughen he wolde,
And efte the balder be · to bete myne hewen;
But Resoun haue reuthe on hym · he shal rest in my stokkes,
And that as longe as he lyueth · but lowenesse hym borwe.'
  Somme men redde Resoun tho · to haue reuthe on that schrewe,
And for to conseille the kynge · and Conscience after,
That Mede moste be meynpernour · Resoun thei bisouʒte,
  'Rede me nouʒte,' quod Resoun · 'no reuthe to haue,
Til lordes and ladies · louien alle treuthe,
And haten al harlotrye · to heren it, or to mouthen it;
Tyl Pernelles purfil · be put in here hucche;

'Nay,' quod the kyng tho · 'so god ȝiue me blisse!
Wrong went not so awei · til ich wite more;
Lope he so lihtliche awei · lauȝwhen he wolde,
And eft be the baldore · forte beten myne hynen;
Bote Reson haue reuthe of him · he resteth in the stokkes
Also longe as I lyue · bote more loue hit make.'
Thenne summe radde Reson · to haue reuthe of that schrewe,
And to counseile the kyng · and Concience bothe,
That Meede moste be meynpernour · Reson heo bi-souȝte.
'Rede me not,' quod Reson · 'reuthe to haue,
Til lordes, and ladies · louen alle treuthe,
And Perneles porfyl · be put in heore whucche;

'Betere ys that bote · bale a-doun brynge,
Than bale be ybete · and bote neuere the betere.'
Thanne gan Mede meken here · and mercy by-souhte,
And profrede Pees a present · al of pure golde;
'Haue this, man, of me,' quath hue · 'to amende thy scathe;
For ich wol wage for Wrong · he wol do so no more.'
Pytouslich Pees tho · preyede the kyng
To haue mercy on that man · that meny tyme greuede hym—
'For he hath waged me wel · as Wisdome hym tauhte;
Mede hath mad myne amendes · ich may no more asken,
So alle myne claymes ben quyt · by so the kynge asente.'
'Nay, by Crist,' quath the kynge · 'for Consciences sake,
Wrong goth nat so away · ar ich wite more;
Loupe he so lyghtlich · lauhen he wolde,
And eft be the boldere · to bete myne hewes;
Bote Reson haue reuthe of hym · he shal reste in stockes
As longe as ich lyue · for hus luther werkes.'
Somme radde Reson tho · to haue reuthe on that shrewe,
And for to consail the kyng · on Conscience thei loked;
That Mede myghte be menepernour · reson thei by-souhte.
'Red me nat,' quath Reson · 'no reuthe to haue,
Til lordes and ladies · louen alle treuthe,
And haten alle harlotrie · to huyren other to mouthen hit;
And Purneles porfil · be put in the whucche,

A. 94. hynen TUD; puple H; V *om.* **C.** 89. ybete I; I-bete FS; bete P. 90. muken P. 92. þus (*for* þis) P. 101. *After* lyghtlich P *inserts* a-wey. 102. hewes I; hywes P; hynus FS. 111. wucche P.

Til children chereschinge · be chastet with ȝerdes,
Til harlotes holynesse · be holden for an hyne;
Til clerkes and knihtes · ben corteis of heore mouthes,
And haten to don heor harlotrie · and vsun hit no more;
Til prestes heore prechyng · preuen hit in hem-seluen,
And don hit in dede · to drawen vs to gode;
Til seint Iame beo i-souht · ther I schal a-signe,
And no man go to Galys · bote he go for euere;
And alle Rome-renners · for robbeours of bi-ȝonde
Bere no seluer ouer see · that bereth signe of the kyng,
Nouther grotes ne gold i-graue · with the kynges coroune,

And childryn cherissyng · be chastyng with ȝerdes;
And harlotes holynesse · be holden for an hyne;
Til clerken coueitise be · to clothe the pore and to fede,
And religious romares · *recordare* in here cloistres,
As seynt Benet hem bad · Bernarde and Fraunceys;
And til prechoures prechyng · be preued on hemseluen;
Tyl the kynges conseille · be the comune profyte;
Tyl bisschopes baiardes · ben beggeres chambres,
Here haukes and her houndes · helpe to pore religious;
And til seynt Iames be souȝte · there I shal assigne,

That no man go to Galis · but if he go for euere;
And alle Rome-renneres · for robberes of byȝonde
Bere no siluer ouer see · that signe of kynge sheweth,
Noyther graue ne vngraue · golde noither siluer,
Vppon forfeture of that fee · who so fynt hym at Douere,
But if it be marchaunt or his man · or messagere with letteres,

Prouysoure or prest · or penaunt for his synnes.
And ȝet,' quod Resoun, 'bi the rode · I shal no reuthe haue,
While Mede hath the maistrye · in this moot-halle.
Ac I may shewe ensaumples · as I se other-while;
I sey it by my-self,' quod he · 'and it so were
That I were kynge with crowne · to kepen a rewme,
Shulde neuere wronge in this worlde · that I wite myȝte,
Ben vnpunisshed in my powere · for peril of my soule!

A. 119. *From* UT; VH *omit the line.* B. 128. byȝende L.

Vppon forfet of that fe · hose hit fynde at Douere,
Bote hit beo marchaund othur his men · or messager with lettres,
Or prouisours or preestes · that popes a-vaunset.
And 3it,' quod Reson, 'bi the roode · I schal no reuthe haue,
While Meede hath eny maystrie to mooten in this halle;
Ac y mai schewe 3ow ensamples · y seie be myselue.
For I sigge hit for my soule · and hit so weore
That ich weore kyng with croune · to kepen a reame,
Scholde neuer wrong in this world · that ich i-wite mihte,
Ben vn-punissched beo my pouwer · for peril of my soule!

And children cherissing · be chasted with 3erdes,
And harlotes holynesse · be an hey ferye;
Til klerken couetise · be cloth for the poure,
Here pelure and here palfrayes · poure menne lyflode,
And religious out-ryders · reclused in here cloistres,
And be as Benit hem bad · Domenik and Fraunceis;
Tyl that lerede men lyue · as thei lere and techen,
And til the kynges consayl · be al comune profit;
Tyl bisshopes ben bakers · brewers and taylours,
For alle manere men · that thei fyndeth nedfol;
Tyl seynt Iame be souht · ther poure syke lyggen,
In prisons and in poore cotes · for pilgrymages to Rome,
So that non go to Galys · bote it be for euere;
And alle Rome-renners · for robbers in Fraunce
Bere no suluer ouer see · that kynges sygne sheweth,
Neither graue ne vngraue · of gold ne of suluer,
Vp forfeture of the fee · ho so fynt hym ouerwarde,
Bote it be marchaunt other hus man · other messager with lettres,
Prouisour other prest · other penaunt for hus synnes.
And 3ut,' quath Reson, 'by the rode · ich shall no reuthe haue,
Whyl Mede hath the maistrye · ther motyng is atte barre.
Ac ich may seye ensamples · as ich see othere;
Ich seye it for my-selue,' quath Reson · 'and hit so were,
That ich were kyng with corone · to kepe eny reame,
Shold neuere wronge in this worlde · that ich wite myghte,
Be vnpunysshed in my power · for peril of my soule,

C. 120. bisshepes P. ben IM; be F; and P. 132. Wyl P. his P.

Ne gete grace thorw ȝift · so me god helpe!
Ne for meede haue merci · but mekenesse hit make.
For *nullum malum* the mon mette · with *inpunitum*,
And bad *nullum bonum* · be *irremuneratum*.
Let thi clerk, sire kyng · construe this in Englisch;
And ȝif thou worchest hit in wit · ich wedde bothe myn eres,
That Lawe schal ben a laborer · and leden a-feld dounge,
And Loue schal leden thi lond · as the leof lyketh.'
Clerkes that were confessours · coupled hem to-gedere,

Ne gete my grace for giftes'. so me God saue!
Ne for no mede haue mercy · but mekenesse it make.
For *nullum malum* the man · mette with *inpunitum*,
And badde *nullum bonum* · be *irremuneratum*.
Late ȝowre confessoure, sire kynge · construe this vnglosed;
And ȝif ȝe worken it in werke · I wedde myne eres,
That Lawe shal ben a laborere · and lede a-felde donge,
And Loue shal lede thi londe · as the lief lyketh!'
Clerkes that were confessoures · coupled hem togideres,
Alle to construe this clause · and for the kynges profit,
Ac nouȝte for conforte of the comune · ne for the kynges soule.
For I seiȝe Mede in the moot-halle · on men of lawe wynke,
And thei lawghyng lope to hire · and lafte Resoun manye.
Waryn Wisdome · wynked vppon Mede,
And seide, 'Madame, I am ȝowre man · what so my mouth Iangleth;
I falle in floreines,' quod that freke · 'an faile speche ofte.'
Alle riȝtful recorded · that Resoun treuthe tolde,
And Witt acorded ther-with · and comended his wordes,
And the moste peple in the halle · and manye of the grete,
And leten Mekenesse a maistre · and Mede a mansed schrewe.
Loue lete of hir liȝte · and Lewte ȝit lasse,
And seide it so heiȝe · that al the halle it herde,
'Who-so wilneth hir to wyf · for welth of her godis,
But he be knowe for a koke-wolde · kut of my nose!'
Mede mourned tho · and made heuy chere,
For the moste comune of that courte · called hire an hore.
Ac a sysoure and a sompnoure · sued hir faste,

A. 124. god THUD; gold V. 126. with TUD; with-outen V.

Forte construe this clause · and distinkte hit after.
Whon Resun to this reynkes · rehersede theose wordes,
Nas non in that moot-halle · more ne lasse,
That ne held Reson a mayster tho · and Meede a muche wrecche.
Loue lette of Meede luite · and louh hire to scorn,
And seide hit so loude · that sothnesse hit herde,
'Hose wilneth hire to wyue · for weolthe of hire godes,
Bote he beo a cokewold i-kore · cut of bothe myn eres!'

Ne gete my grace thorw eny gyft · ne glosyng speche,
Ne thorw mede do mercy · by Marye of heuene!
For man, *nullum malum* · mette with *impunitum*,
And bad that *nullum bonum* · bee *irremuneratum*.
Lete thy confessour, syre kyng · construe this in English,
And ȝif ȝe worchen hit in werke · ich wedde bothe myn handes,
That lawe shal be a laborer · and lede a felde donge,
And loue shal lede thy land · as the leef lyketh.'
Clerkus that were confessours · couplede hem to-gederes,
To construe this clause · kyndeliche what hit menede.

Mede in the mote-halle tho · on men of lawe gan wynke,
In sygne that thei sholde · with som sotel speche
Reherce tho a-non ryght · that myghte Reson stoppe.

And alle ryghtful recordeden · that Reson treuthe seyde,
And Kynde Wit and Conscience · cortesliche thankede;
Reson for hus ryght speche · riche and poure hym louede,
And seiden, 'we seth wel · syre Reson, by thy wordes,
That meknesse worth mayster · ouer Mede atte laste.'
Loue let lyght of Mede · and Leaute ȝut lasse,
And cryed vp-on Conscience · the kynge hit myghte yhure,
'Who so wylneth hure to wyue · for welthe of hure goodes,
Bote he be knowe for cokewold · kut of my nose!'
Mede mornede tho · and made heuy cheere,
For the comune called hure · queynte comune hore.
A sysour and a somner tho · softeliche forth ȝeden
With Mede the mayde · out of the mot-halle.

C. 143. worten (*error for* worchen) P. 145. leef MFSE; luf P. 147. wat P. 148. þe MFISE; þat P. 150. stope P. 161. called FSE; cald P.

Was nouther Wisdam tho · ne Witti his feere,
That couthe warpen a word · to with-siggen Reson;
Bote stareden for studiing · and stooden as bestes.
The kyng acordede, bi crist · to Resons connynge,
And rehersede that Reson hedde · rihtfoliche I-schewet:
'Bote hit is hard, be myn hed · herto hit bringe,
Al my lige leodes · to lede thus euene.'

And a schireues clerke · byschrewed al the route,
'For ofte haue I,' quod he · 'holpe ȝow atte barre,
And ȝit ȝeue ȝe me neuere · the worthe of a russhe.'
The kynge called Conscience · and afterwardes Resoun,
And recorded that Resoun · had riȝtfullich schewed,
And modilich vppon Mede · with myȝte the kynge loked,
And gan wax wrothe with lawe · for Mede almoste had shent it,
And seide, 'thorw ȝowre lawe, as I leue · I lese many chetes;
Mede ouer-maistrieth lawe · and moche treuthe letteth.
Ac Resoun shal rekene with ȝow · ȝif I regne any while,
And deme ȝow, bi this day · as ȝe han deserued.
Mede shal nouȝte meynprise ȝow · bi the Marie of heuene!
I wil haue leute in lawe · and lete be al ȝowre Ianglyng,
And as moste folke witnesseth wel · wronge shal be demed.'
Quod Conscience to the kynge · 'but the comune wil assent,
It is ful hard, bi myn hed · here-to to brynge it,
Alle ȝowre lige leodes · to lede thus euene.'
'By hym that rauȝte on the rode' · quod Resoun to the kynge,
'But if I reule thus ȝowre rewme · rende out my guttes!
ȝif ȝe bidden buxomnes · be of myne assente.'
'And I assent,' seith the kynge · 'by seynt Marie my lady,
Be my conseille comen · of clerkis and of erlis.
Ac redili, Resoun · thow shalt nouȝte ride fro me,
For as longe as I lyue · lete the I nelle.'

C. 167. modiliche MFSEG; myldeliche P. 169. Thorȝe P. 171. rekne (*for* rekene) I; rikene M; regne P. wyle P. 174. ianglend P.

'Bi him that rauhte on the roode,' · quod Reson to the kyng,
'Bote I rule thus thi reame · rend out my ribbes!
3if hit beo so þat boxumnesse · beo at myn assent.'
'Ich assente,' quod the kyng · 'bi seinte Marie mi ladi,
Beo my counseil i-come · of clerkes and of erles.
Bote rediliche, Reson · thou rydest not heonnes,
For as longe as I liue · lette the I nulle.'

A shereyues clerk cryede · 'a! *capiatis* Mede,
Et saluo custodias · sed non cum carceratis.'
The kynge to his consail tho · tok Conscience and Reson,
And modiliche vp-on Mede · meny tyme lokede,
And lourede vp-on men of lawe · and lightliche seide,
'Thor3 3oure lawe, ich leyue · ich lese menye escheytes;
Mede and men of 3oure craft · muche treuthe letteth.
Ac Reson shal rekene with 3ow · yf ich regne eny whyle,
And deme 3ow, by thys day · as 3e haue deseruyd.
Mede shal not meynprise 3ow · by Marye of heuene,
Ich wolle haue leaute for my lawe; · let be al 3oure Ianglyng;
By leel men and lyf-holy · my lawe shal be demyd.'
Quath Conscience to the kynge · 'with-oute the commune help,
Hit is ful hard, by myn hefd · ther-to hit to brynge,
And alle 3oure lege ledes · to lede thus euene.'
'By hym that rauhte on rode' · quath Reson to the kynge,
'Bote ich rewely thus alle reames · reueth me my syght;
And brynge alle men to bowe · with-oute byter wounde,
With-oute mercement other manslauht · amenden alle reames.
'Ich wolde hit were,' quath the kyng · 'wel al a-boute.
For-thy, Reson, redelyche · thow shalt nat ryden hennes,
Bote be my chyf chaunceler · in chekyr and in parlement,
And Conscience in alle my courtes · be as kynges Iustice."
'Ich a-sente," seyde Reson · 'by so thy-self y-huyre,
Audi alteram partem · a-mong aldermen and comuners;
And that vnsittynge Suffraunce · ne seele 3oure pryueie letteres,
Ne sende *supersedeas* · bote ich asente,' quath Reson;
'And ich dar legge my lyf · that Loue wol lene the suluer,
To wage thyne, and help wynne · that thow wilnest after,

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176. whith-oute P. P *om.* the. 181. wonde P. 190. seynde P. 191. þe IMFSE; þat P.

'Icham redi,' quod Reson · 'to reste with the euere;
So that Concience beo vr counseiler · kepe I no betere.'

'I am aredy,' quod Resoun · 'to reste with ȝow euere,
So Conscience be of owre conseille · I kepe no bettere.'
'And I graunt,' quod the kynge · 'goddes forbode it faile,
Als longe as owre lyf lasteth · lyue we togideres.'

'I graunte gladly,' quod the kyng · 'god forbeode he fayle;
And also longe as I lyue · leue we to-gedere.' 158

More than al thy marchauns · other thy mytrede bisshopes,
Other Lumbardes of Lukes · that lyuen 'by lone as Iewes.' 194
The kyng comaunded Conscience tho · to congie alle hus officers,
And receyuen tho that Reson louede; · and ryȝt with that ich a-wakede. 196

Hic explicit passus quintus.

C. 196. wit P.

[*Not in* **A**-*text or* **B**-*text.*]

PASSUS VI.

Incipit passus sextus.

THUS ich a-waked, god wot · whanne ich wonede on Cornehulle,
Kytte and ich in a cote · clothed as a lollere,
And lytel y-lete by · leyue me for sothe,
Among lollares of London · and lewede heremytes;
For ich made of tho men · as reson me tauhte.
For as ich cam by Conscience · with Reson ich mette
In an hote heruest · whenne ich hadde myn hele,
And lymes to labore with · and louede wel fare,
And no dede to do · bote drynke and to slepe.
In hele and in vnite · on me aposede;
Romynge in remembraunce · thus Reson me aratede.
'Canstow seruen,' he seide · 'other syngen in a churche,
Other coke for my cokers · other to the cart picche,
Mowe other mowen · other make bond to sheues,
Repe other be a repereyue · and a-ryse erliche,
Other haue an horne and be haywarde · and liggen oute a nyghtes,
And kepe my corn in my croft · fro pykers and theeues?
Other shappe shon other clothes · other shep other kyn kepe,
Heggen other harwen · other swyn other gees dryue,
Other eny other kyns craft · that to the comune nedeth,
Hem that bedreden be · by-lyue to fynde?'
'Certes,' ich seyde · 'and so me god helpe,
Ich am to waik to worche · with sykel other with sythe,
And to long, leyf me · lowe for to stoupe,
To worchen as a workeman · eny whyle to dure.'

C. 1. wot god P. wanne P. 3. And a lytel P. y-lete IMSG; ich let (*wrongly*) P. 6. wit P. 7. wenne P. 19. Eggen P. 20. oþer MIFSG; P *om.* nedeþ IME; nudeþ P. 25. wyle P.

[*Not in* **A**-*text or* **B**-*text*; *see* p. 118.]

'Thenne hauest thow londes to lyue by' · quath Reson,
'other lynage riche
That fynden the thy fode? · for an ydel man thow semest,
A spendour that spende mot · other a spille-tyme,
Other beggest thy bylyue · a-boute at menne hacches,
Other faitest vp-on Frydays · other feste-dayes in churches,
The whiche is lollarene lyf · that lytel ys preysed,
Ther ryghtfulnesse rewardeth · ryght as men deserueth,
Reddit unicuique iuxta opera sua.
Other thow art broke, so may be · in body other in membre,
Other ymaymed throw som mys-hap · wher-by thow myȝt be excused?'
'Whanne ich ȝong was,' quath ich · 'meny ȝer hennes,
My fader and my frendes · founden me to scole,
Tyl ich wiste wyterliche · what holy wryt menede,
And what is best for the body · as the bok telleth,
And sykerest for the soule · by so ich wolle continue.
And ȝut fond ich neuere in faith · sytthen my frendes deyden,
Lyf that me lyked · bote in thes longe clothes.
Yf ich by laboure sholde lyue · and lyflode deseruen,
That labour that ich lerned best · ther-with lyue ich sholde;
In eadem uocatione in qua uocati estis, manete.
And ich lyue in Londone · and on Londone bothe,
The lomes that ich laboure with · and lyflode deserue
Ys *pater-noster* and my prymer · *placebo* and *dirige*,
And my sauter som tyme · and my seuene psalmes.
Thus ich synge for hure soules · of suche as me helpen,
And tho that fynden me my fode · vouchen saf, ich trowe,
To be welcome whanne ich come · other-whyle in a monthe,
Now with hym and now with hure · and thus-gate ich begge
With-oute bagge other botel · bote my wombe one.
And al-so more-ouer · me thynketh, syre Reson,
Men sholde constreyne no clerke · to knauene werkes;

C. 27. hydel P. 29. ate P. 31. wiche P. 33. ert P. 34. wer-by P. 35. Wanne P. 37, 38. wat P. 42. Hyf P. 43. þer-whit P. *in* M; *the rest omit.* *manete* M; *the rest omit.* 44. londone MSE; londene P. 49. vochen P. 50. wolcome P. wanne P. wyle P.

[*Not in* **A**-*text or* **B**-*text.*]

For by lawe of *Leuitici* · that oure lord ordeynede,
Clerkes that aren crouned · of kynde vnderstondyng
Sholde nother swynke ne swete · ne swere at enquestes,
Ne fyghte in no vauntwarde · ne hus fo greue;
Non reddas malum pro malo.
For it ben aires of heuene · alle that ben crounede,
And in queer and in kirkes · Cristes owene mynestres,
Dominus pars hereditatis mee; & alibi: Clementia non constringit.
Hit by-cometh for clerkus · Crist for to seruen,
And knaues vncrouned · to cart and to worche.
For shold no clerk be crouned · bote yf he ycome were
Of franklens and free men · and of folke yweddede.
Bondmen and bastardes · and beggers children,
Thuse by-longeth to labour · and lordes kyn to seruen
Bothe god and good men · as here degree asketh;
Some to synge masses · other sitten and wryte,
Rede and receyue · that reson ouhte spende;
Ac sith bondemenne barnes · han be mad bisshopes,
And barnes bastardes · han ben archidekenes,
And sopers and here sones · for seluer han be knyghtes,
And lordene sones here laborers · and leid here rentes to wedde,
For the ryght of this reame · ryden a-ȝens oure enemys,
In confort of the comune · and the kynges worshep,
And monkes and moniales · that mendinauns sholden fynde,
Han mad here kyn knyghtes · and knyghtfees purchased,
Popes and patrones · poure gentil blod refuseth,
And taken Symondes sone · seyntewarie to kepe.
Lyf-holynesse and loue · han ben longe hennes,
And wole, til hit be wered out · or otherwise ychaunged.
For-thy rebuke me ryght nouht · Reson, ich ȝow praye;
For in my conscience ich knowe · what Crist wolde that ich wrouhte.

C. 59. and alle P. 60. and—kirkes I; in churches P. 66. kyn to MF; children sholde P. 70. Ac IMSG; And P. 74. þis IMS; þes P. 77. purchase P.

[*Not in* **A**-*text or* **B**-*text; see* p. 120.]

Preyers of a parfyt man · and penaunce discret
Ys the leueste labour · that oure lord pleseth.
Non de solo,' ich seide · 'for sothe *uiuit homo*,
Nec in pane & pabulo · the *pater-noster* witnesseth;
Fiat uoluntas tua · fynt ous alle thynges.'
Quath Conscience, 'by Crist · ich can nat see this lyeth;
Ac it semeth nouht parfytnesse · in cytees for to begge,
Bote he be obediencer · to pryour other to mynstre.'
'That ys soth,' ich seide · 'and so ich by-knowe,
That ich haue tynt tyme · and tyme mysspended;
And ȝut, ich hope, as he · that ofte haueth chaffared,
That ay hath lost and lost · and atte laste hym happed
He bouhte suche a bargayn · he was the bet euere,
And sette hus lost at a lef · at the laste ende,
Suche a wynnynge hym warth · thorw wordes of hus grace;
Simile est regnum celorum thesauro abscondito in agro, & cetera:
Mulier que inuenit dragmam vnam, et cetera;
So hope ich to haue · of hym that is al-myghty
A gobet of hus grace · and bygynne a tyme,
That alle tymes of my tyme · to profit shal turne.'
'Ich rede the,' quath Reson tho · 'rape the to by-gynne
The lyf that ys lowable · and leel to the soule'—
'ȝe, and continue;' quath Conscience · and to the kirke ich wente.

And to the kirke gan ich go · god to honourie,
By-for the crois on my knees · knocked ich my brest,
Sykinge for my synnes · seggynge my *pater-noster*,
Wepyng and wailinge · tyl ich was a slepe.

[*Continued on* p. 123.]

C. 84. P *om.* a. 88. *tuas* P. 95. atte laste EIFS; at þe latiste P. 98. wyrdes P. *vnam* M; P om. 104, 105. kirke IF; churche P. 107. sennes P.

PASSUS V.

Passus quintus de visione.

THE kyng and his knihtes · to the churche wenten
To heere matyns and masse · and to the mete aftur.
Thenne wakede I of my wink · me was wo with alle
That I nedde sadloker i-slept · and i-seȝe more.
Er I a furlong hedde i-fare · a feyntise me hente,
That forther mihti not a-fote · for defaute of sleep.
I sat softeliche a-doun · and seide my beo-leeue,

PASSUS V.

Passus quintus de Visione.

THE kyng and his ·knightes · to the kirke wente
To here matynes of the day · and the masse after.
Thanne waked I of my wynkynge · and wo was with-alle,
That I ne hadde sleped sadder · and yseiȝen more.
Ac er I hadde faren a fourlonge · feyntise me hente,
That I ne myȝte ferther a-foot · for defaute of slepynge;
And sat softly adown · and seide my bileue,
And so I babeled on my bedes · thei brouȝte me a-slepe.
And thanne saw I moche more · than I bifore tolde,
For I say the felde ful of folke · that I bifore of seyde,
And how Resoun gan arrayen hym · alle the reume to preche,
And with a crosse afor the kynge · comsed thus to techen.
He preued that thise pestilences · were for pure synne,
And the southwest wynde · on Saterday at euene
Was pertliche for pure pryde · and for no poynt elles.
Piries and plomtrees · were puffed to the erthe,
In ensample, ȝe segges · ȝe shulden do the bettere.
Beches and brode okes · were blowen to the grounde,
Torned vpward her tailles · in tokenynge of drede,
That dedly synne at domesday · shal fordon hem alle.

B. 13. were W; was LCRO.

And so I blaberde on my beodes · that brouhte me a-slepe.
Then sauh I muche more · then I beofore tolde,
For I sauh the feld ful of folk · that ich of bi-fore schewede,
And Concience with a crois · com for to preche.
He preide the peple · haue pite of hem-selue,
And preuede that this pestilences · weore for puire synne,
And this south-westerne wynt · on a Seterday at euen
Was a-perteliche for pruide · and for no poynt elles.
Piries and plomtres · weore passchet to the grounde,
In ensaumple to men · that we scholde do the bettre.
Beches and brode okes · weore blowen to the eorthe,
And turned vpward the tayl · in toknyng of drede
That dedly synne or domesday · schulde fordon hem alle.

[*Continued from* p. 121.]

Thenne mette me moche more · than ich by-fore tolde
Of the mater that ich mette fyrst · on Maluerne hulles.
Ich sauh the feld ful of folk · fram ende to other,
And Reson reuested · ry3t as a pope,
And Conscience his crocer · by-fore the kynge stande.
Reson reuerentliche · by-for al the reame
Prechede, and prouede · that thuse pestilences
Was for pure synne · to punyshe the puple;
And the south-west wynd · on Saterday at eue
Was pertelich for prude · and for no poynt elles.
Piries and plomtrees · were poffed to the erthe
In ensample to syggen ous · we sholde do the betere;
Beches and brode okes · weren blowe to the grounde,
And turned vpward here tayl · in tokenynge of drede
That dedlich synne er domys day · shal for-do ous alle.

C. 109, 110. mete P. 111. to þe oþer P; *but* IMFSE *om.* þe.

Of this matere I mihte · momele ful longe,
Bote I sigge as I sauh · (so me god helpe)!
How Concience with a cros · comsede to preche.
He bad wastors go worche · what thei best couthe,
And wynne that thei wasteden · with sum maner craft.
He preiȝede Pernel · hire porfil to leue,
And kepen hit in hire cofre · for catel at neode.
Thomas he tauȝte · to take twey staues,

Of this matere I myȝte · mamely ful longe,
Ac I shal seye as I saw · so me god helpe!
How pertly afor the poeple · Resoun gan to preche.
He bad wastoure go worche · what he best couthe,
And wynnen his wastyng · with somme manere crafte.
And preyed Peronelle · her purfyle to lete,
And kepe it in hir cofre · for catel at hire nede.
Thomme Stowue he tauȝte · to take two staues,
And fecche Felice home · fro the wyuen pyne.
He warned Watt · his wyf was to blame,
That hire hed was worth halue a marke · his hode nouȝte worth a grote.
And bad Bette kut · a bow other tweyne,
And bete Betoun ther-with · but if she wolde worche.
And thanne he charged chapmen · to chasten her childeren;
Late no wynnynge hem forweny · whil thei be ȝonge,
Ne for no pouste of pestilence · plese hem nouȝte out of resoun.
'My syre seyde so to me · and so did my dame,
That the leuere childe · the more lore bihoueth,
And Salamon seide the same · that Sapience made,
Qui parcit virge, odit filium.
The Englich of this latyn is · who-so wil it knowe,
Who-so spareth the sprynge · spilleth his children.'
And sithen he preyed prelatz · and prestes to-gideres,
'That ȝe prechen to the peple · preue it on ȝowre-seluen,
And doth it in dede · it shal drawe ȝow to good;
If ȝe lyuen as ȝe leren vs · we shal leue ȝow the bettere.'

A. 28. staues THU; stauenes V. **B.** 29. filice L.

And fette hom Felice · from wyuene pyne.
He warnede Watte · his wyf was to blame,
That hire hed was worth a mark · and his hod worth a grote.
He chargede chapmen · to chasten heore children;
Let hem wonte non eiȝe · while that thei ben ȝonge.
He preyede preestes · and prelates to-gedere,
That thei prechen the peple · to preuen hit in hem-seluen—
'And libben as ȝe lereth vs · we wolen loue ow the betere.'

Of this master ich myghte · momely ful longe,
Ac ich shal seye as ich seih · slepynge, as it were,
How Reson radde al the reame · ryght for to lyuen.
He bad wastours go worche · and wynne here sustinaunce
Thorw som trewe trauail · and no tyme spille.
He preide Purnele · here porfil to leue,
And kepe hit in here cofre · for catell at hure nede.
He tauhte Thomme Stowe · to take two staues,
And fecche Felice home · fram wyuen pyne.
He warnede Watte · hus wif was to blame,
For hure hefd was worth half mark · and hus hod nat a grote.
He bad Bette go kutte · a bowh other tweye,
And bete Beton ther-myd · bote hue wolde worche.
He charged chapmen · to chasten here children,
And lete no wynnynge for-wene hem · the while thei ben ȝonge;

For ho so spareth the spring · spilleth hus children;
And so wrot the wise · to wissen us alle,
Qui parcit uirge, odit filium.

And sitthe he preide prelates · and prestes to-geders,
That hij precheth to the puple · prouen hit hem-selue;

'Lyue ȝe as ȝe lereth ous · we shulleth leyue ȝow the bettere.'

C. 124. ful IMFSEG; wel P. 130. nude P. 131. stowe E; stone P. 136. he (*for* hue) P. 138. wile P. 140. wisen hus P.

And seththe he radde religioun · the rule for to holde—
'Leste the kyng and his counseil · 3or comunes apeire,
And beo stiward in oure stude · til 3e be stouwet betere. 39

From **A.** xi. 201–203.
[Gregory the grete clerke · a good pope in his tyme
Of religioun the rewele · he reherside in his morals,
And seide it in ensaumple · that thei shulde do the betere:

And sithen he radde religioun · here reule to holde—
'Leste the kynge and his conseille · 3owre comunes appayre,
And ben stuwardes of 3owre stedes · til 3e be ruled bettre.' 48

[Gregorie the grete clerke · and the goed pope 292
Of religioun the reule · reherseth in his morales,
And seyth it in ensaumple · for thei schulde do there-after,
'Whenne fissches failen the flode · or the fresche water,
Thei deyen for drouthe · whanne thei drie ligge; 296
Ri3t so, quod Gregorie · religioun roileth,
Sterueth and stynketh · and steleth lordes almesses,
That oute of couent and cloystre · coueyten to libbe.'
For if heuene be on this erthe · and ese to any soule, 300
It is in cloistere or in scole · be many skilles I fynde;
For in cloistre cometh no man · to chide ne to fi3te,
But alle is buxumnesse there and bokes · to rede and to lerne.
In scole there is scorne · but if a clerke wil lerne, 304
From **B.** x. 292–320.
And grete loue and lykynge · for eche of hem loueth other.
Ac now is religioun a ryder · a rowmer bi stretes,
A leder of louedayes · and a londe-bugger,
A priker on a palfray · fro manere to manere, 308
An heep of houndes at his ers · as he a lorde were.
And but if his knaue knele · that shal his cuppe brynge,
He loureth on hym and axeth hym · who tau3te hym curteisye?
Litel had lordes to done · to 3yue londe fram her heires 312
To religious, that haue no reuthe · though it reyné on her auteres.
In many places ther hij persones ben · be hem-self at ese,
Of the pore haue thei no pite · and that is her charite;
Ac thei leten hem as lordes · her londe lith so brode. 316
Ac there shal come a kyng · and confesse 3ow religiouses,
And bete 3ow as the bible telleth · for brekynge of 3owre reule,
And amende monyales · monkes and chanouns,
And putten hem to her penaunce · *ad pristinum statum ire*, 320

C. 144. P *om.* he. 145. apeyere P. 146. stewed F; stuede P; stuyd S; stywed G; stowed I. 149. wenne P. 150. dryen P. 154. in a cloistre P. 156. lykyng EIMF; lokynge P. 158. yholde EG; holde P. 159. *This line is from* MIFSG; P *om.* 160. to IM; in-to P. 162. but

Whanne fisshes faile the flood · or the fresshe watir,
Thei diȝe for the drouȝte · whanne thei dreiȝe lengen;
From A. xi. 204–210. Riȝt so be religioun · it roileth and steruith,
That out of couent and cloistre · coueiten to libben.'
Ac now is religioun a ridere · and a rennere aboute,
A ledere of louedayes · and a lond-biggere,
Poperith on a palfrey · to toune and to toune.]

And sitthe he radde religion · here ruele to holde,
'Leste the kyng and hus consail · ȝoure comunes a-peyre,
And be stywardes of ȝoure stedes · til ȝe be stewed betere.
Gregorie the grete clerk · gart write in bokes
The ruele of alle religious · ryghtful and obedient.
Right as fisshes in flod · whenne hem faileth water,
Deyen for drouthe · whenne thei drye liggen,
Ryght so religion · roteth and sterueth,
That out of couent and cloistre · coueyteth to dwelle.
For yf heuene be on thys erthe · other eny eyse for saule,
Hit is in cloistre other in scole · by meny skyles ich fynde.
For in cloistre cometh no man · to chide ne to fighte;
In scole ys loue and lownesse · and lykyng to lerne.
Ac meny day, men telleth · bothe monkes and chanouns
Han ride out of a-ray · here ruele vuel yholde,
Lederes of louedaies · and landes purchassed,
And priked a-boute on palfrais · fro places to maners,
An hepe of houndes at hus ers · as he a lord were;
And but hus knaue knele · that shal hus coppe holde,
He loketh al louryng · and 'lordein' hym calleth.
Lytel hadde lordes a-do · to ȝeue londe fro here aires
To religious, that han no reuthe · thauh hit reyne on here auters.
In places ther thei persons beth · by hem-self at ese,
Of the poure han thei no pyte · that is here pure charite.
ȝe leten ȝow alle as lordes · ȝoure londe lyth to brode.
Ac ȝut shal come a kyng · and confesse ȝow alle,
And bete ȝow, as the byble telleth · for brekyng of ȝoure reule,
And amende ȝow monkes · moniales, and chanons,
And putte ȝow to ȝoure penaunce · *ad pristinum statum ire.*

MFS; bit P. 163. loureng P. lordein IME; lorden P. 165. religious IMFSE; religion P. ryne P. on IMFSG; in P. 167. his (*for* is) P. poure (*for* pure) P.

And ȝe that secheth seynt Iame · and seintes at Roome,
Secheth seint Treuthe · for he may sauen ow alle;

And barounes with erles beten hem · thorugh *beatus virres* techynge,
That here barnes claymen · and blame ȝow foule:
Hij in curribus, et hij in equis; ipsi obligati sunt, &c.
And thanne freres in here freitoure · shal fynden a keye ·
Of Constantynes coffres · in which is the catel
That Gregories god-children · han yuel dispended.
And thanne shal the abbot of Abyndoun · and alle his issu for euere
Haue a knokke of a kyng · and incurable the wounde.
That this worth soth, seke ȝe · that oft ouer-se the bible:
Quomodo cessauit exactor, quieuit tributum; contriuit dominus baculum impiorum, et virgam dominancium cedencium plaga insanabili, &c.
Ac ar that kynge come · Cayme shal awake.]

'*From* **B.** x. 321–329.

And sithen he conseilled the kynge · the comune to louye,
'It is thi tresore, if tresoun ne were · and triacle at thi nede.'

And sithen he prayed the pope · haue pite on holicherche,
And er he gyue any grace · gouerne firste hym-selue.
'And ȝe that han lawes to kepe · late treuthe be ȝowre coueytise,
More than golde or other gyftes · if ȝe wil god plese;
For who-so contrarieth treuthe · he telleth in the gospel,
That god knoweth hym nouȝte · ne no seynte of heuene,
Amen dico vobis, nescio vos.
And ȝe that seke seynte Iames · and seintes of Rome,
Seketh seynt Treuthe · for he may saue ȝow alle;
Qui cum patre et filio · that feire hem bifalle
That suweth my sermon;' · and thus seyde Resoun.

C. 174. fretour P. 176. costantyn P. 177. ys (*for* hys) P. 178. wonde P. 180. *Read* kirke. 190. he IMSEG; ȝe P. hoþer P. 194. ouere. 199. Seicheþ P.

Qui cum patre et filio · feire mote you falle.'

And barons and here barnes · blame ȝow and reproue;
Hii in curribus et hi in equis: ipsi obligati sunt, et ceciderunt.
Freres in here freitour · shulle fynde that tyme
Bred with-oute beggynge · to lyue by euere after,
And Constantyn shal be here cook · and couerer of here churche.
For the abbot of Engelonde · and the abbesse hys nece
Shullen haue a knok on here crounes · and in-curable the wounde;
Contriuit dominus baculum impiorum, uirgam dominancium, plaga in-sanabili.
Ac er that kyng come · as cronycles me tolde,
Clerkus and holychurche · shal be clothed newe.
And sitthe he consailed the kyng · hus comune to louye;
For the comune ys the kynges tresour · conscience wot wel,
And al-so,' quath Reson · 'ich rede ȝow riche,
And comuners to a-corden · in alle kynne treuthe.
Let no kynne consail · ne couetyse ȝow departe,
That on wit and on wil · alle ȝoure wardes kepe.
Lo! in heuene an hy · was an holy comune,
Til Lucifer the lyere · leyued that hym-selue
Were wittyour and worthiour · than he that was hus maister.
Hold ȝow in vnite · and he that other wolde
Ys cause of alle combraunce · to confounde a reame.'
And sitthen he preide the pope · haue pyte of holy-churche,
And no grace to graunte · til good loue were
Among alle kynne kynges · ouer cristene puple:
'Comaunde that alle confessours · that eny kynge shryueth,
Enioynye hem pees for here penaunce · and perpetuel forȝeuenesse
Of alle manere acciouns · and eche man loue other.
And ȝe that secheth seint Iame · and seyntes of Rome,
Secheth seint Treuthe · in sauacion of ȝoure saules:
Qui cum patre et filio · that faire hem by-falle
That suweth my sarmon' · and thus ended Reson.

Hic explicit passus sextus.

Thenne ron Repentaunce · and rehersed this teeme,
And made William to weope · watur with his eȝen.
Pernel Proud-herte · platte hire to grounde,
And lay longe ar heo lokede · and to vr ladi criede,
And beo-hiȝte to him · that vs alle maade,
Heo wolde vn-souwen hire smok · and setten ther an here

Thanne ran Repentance · and reherced his teme,
And gert Wille to wepe · water with his eyen.

SUPERBIA.

Peronelle Proude-herte · platte hir to the erthe,
And lay longe ar she loked · and 'lorde, mercy!' cryed,
And byhiȝte to hym · that vs alle made,
She shulde vnsowen hir serke · and sette there an heyre
To affaiten hire flesshe · that fierce was to synne:
'Shal neuere heiȝe herte me hente · but holde me lowe,
And suffre to be myssayde— · and so did I neuere.
But now wil I meke me · and mercy biseche,
For al this I haue · hated in myne herte.'

C. N.B. *The errors in* P, *involving misuse of* h, *are henceforth silently corrected.* 6. vnsywe P. 8. heigh I; hy FS; hi M; myn P. 10. muke P. 21. and al my wit P. vuel (*for* yuel) P; *see* l. 20. 22. P *om.* ich.

Forte fayten hire flesch · that frele was to synne:
'Schal neuer liht herte me hente · bote holde me lowe,
And suffre to beo mis-seid— · and so dude I neuere.
And nou I con wel meke me · and merci be-seche
Of al that ichaue i-had · envye in myn herte.'

PASSUS VII.

Incipit passus septimus.

WITH that ran Repentaunce · and reherced hus teme,
And made Wille to wepe · water with hus eyen.
Purnele Proute-herte · platte hure to the erthe,
Longe was er hue loked vp · and 'lord, mercy,' criede,
And by-highte to hym · that ous alle made,
Hue sholde vnsowen hure smok · and sette ther an heire,
To afaiten hure flesch · that fers was to synne.
'Shal neuere heigh herte me hente · bote holde me lowe,
And suffre to be myssaide · and so dude ich neuere.
Bote now wolle ich meke me · and mercy by-seche
Of alle that ich haue · yhated in myn herte.'
'Repente the,' quath Repentaunce · 'as Reson the tauhte,
And shryf the sharpliche · and shak of alle pruyde.'—

CONFESSIO SUPERBIE.

'Ich, Pruyde, pacientliche · penaunce ich aske;
For ich formest and ferst · to fader and to moder
Haue ybe vnboxome · ich biseche god of mercy;
And vnboxome ybe · nouht a-baissed to a-gulte
God and alle good men · so gret was myn herte;
In-obedient to holy churche · and to hem that ther seruen;
Demed for hure yuel vices · and excited othere
Thorw my word and my wit · hure yuel workes to shewe;
And scorned hem and othere · yf ich a skyle founde,
Lauhynge al a-loude · for lewede men sholde
Wene that ich were witty · and wyser than a-nothere;
Scorner and vnskilful · to hem that skil shewede,
In alle manere maners · my name to be yknowe;

[*Not in* **A**-*text.*]

From **B.** xiii. 278–284.

[As in aparaile and in porte · proude amonges the peple,
Otherwyse than he hath · with herte or syȝte shewynge;
Hym willynge that alle men wende · he were that he is nouȝte.
For-why he bosteth and braggeth · with many bolde othes,
And in-obedient to ben vndernome · of any lyf lyuynge,
And so syngulere by-hymself · as to syȝte of the poeple,
Was none suche as hym-self · ne none so pope-holy.]

From **B.** xiii. 292–313.

[Wilnyng that men wende . his witte were the best,
Or for his crafty kunnynge · or of clerkes the wisest,
Or strengest on stede · or styuest vnder gurdel,
And louelokest to loken on · and lelest of werkes,
And non so holy as he · ne of lif clennere,
Or feyrest of feytures ‘ of fourme and of schafte,
And most sotyl of songe · other sleyest of hondes,
And large to lene · losse there-by to cacche;
And if he gyueth ouȝte pore gomes · telle what he deleth;
Pore of possessioun · in purse and in coffre,
And as a lyon on to loke · and lordeliche of speche.
Baldest of beggeres · a bostour that nouȝt hath,
In towne and in tauernes · tales to telle,
And segge thinge that he neuere seigh · and for soth sweren it;
Of dedes that he neuere dyd · demen and bosten,
And of werkes that he wel dyd · witnesse and seggen—
‘Lo! if ȝe leue me nouȝt · or that I lye wenen,
Axeth at hym or at hym · and he ȝow can telle,
What I suffred and seighe · and some tymes hadde,
And what I couthe and knewe · and what kynne I come of.’
Al he wolde that men wiste · of werkes and of wordes,
Which myȝte plese the peple · and praysen hymseluen:
Si hominibus placerem, Christi seruus non essem;
Et alibi: nemo potest duobus dominis seruire.]

C. 27. Semeng P. 32. Me wilnynge *must be right*; *cf.* Hym willnynge, *the reading of* R *for* Hym willynge *in* B. xiii. 280; *miswritten* Me wynnynge I; Me wilned PESG. P *om.* as. 35. -nemynge P. 36. singeler P. 37. pope F; pop IMSG; pomp P. 38. in on M; on a P. on anoþer P. 43. my stede P. 44. lykynggest P. 51. þouhte P. 58. and MF; and of IS; of P. 60. P *om.* be.

[*Not in* **A**-*text.*]

Semyng a souereyn on · wher-so me by-fulle
To telle eny tale · ich trowede me wiser
To carpen other to counsaile · than eny lered other lewede.
Prout of aparail · in porte amonge the puple
Other-wise than ich haue · with-ynne other with-oute,
Me wilnynge that men wende · ich were, as in aueyr,
Riche, and resonable · and ryghtful of lyuynge,
Bostynge and braggynge · wyth meny bolde othes,
Auauntyng vp-on my veine glorie · for eny vndernymynge;
And ȝut so synguler by my-self · as to sight of the puple,
Was non suche as my-self · ne non so pope-holy,
Som tyme in on secte · som tyme in another;
In alle kynne couetyse · contreuede how ich myghte
Be holde for holy · an hondred sithe, by that encheison;
Wilnede that men wende · my werkes were the beste,
And konnyngest of my craft · clerkes other othere,
And strengest vp-on stede · and styuest vnder gurdell,
And louelokest to loken on · and lykyngest a bedde;
And lykynge of such a lif · that no lawe preyseth,
Prout of my faire fetours · and for ich songe shulle.
And what ich gaf for godes loue · to god-sybbes ich tolde,
Thei to wene that ich were · wel holy and wel almesful,
And non so bold beggere · to bydden and craue;
Tales to telle · in tauernes and in stretes,
Thyng that neuere was thouht · and ȝut ich swor ich sauh hit,
And lyed on my lykame · and on my lyf bothe.
Of werkes that ich wel dude · wittnesse ich take,
And sygge to suche · that sytten me by-syde,
'Lo, yf ȝe leyue me nouht · other that ȝe wene ich lye,
Aske of hym other of hure · and thei conne ȝow telle
What ich soffrede and seih · and som tyme hadde,
And what ich knew and couthe · and what kyn ich kam of;'—
Al ich wolde that men wuste · when hit to pruyde sounede,
As to be preised a-mong the puple · thauh ich poure semede:
Si hominibus placerem, Christi seruus non essem.
Nemo potest duobus dominis seruire.'
'Now god of hus goodnesse · geue the grace to amende,'
Quath Repentaunce ryght with that; · and thenne roos Enuye.

Lechour seide 'allas!' · and to vr ladi criede
To maken him han merci · for his misdede,
Bitwene god almihti · and his pore soule,
With-that he schulde the Seterday · seuen ȝer after
Drinken bote with the doke · and dynen but ones.
Envye with heui herte · asket aftur schrift,
And gretliche his gultus · bi-ginneth to schewe.
As pale as a pelet · in a palesye he seemede,
I-clothed in a caurimauri · I couthe him not discreue;
A kertil and a courtepy · a knyf be his side;

LUXURIA.

Thanne Lecchoure seyde 'allas!' · and on owre lady he cryed,
To make mercy for his mis-dedes · bitwene god and his soule,
With that he shulde the Saterday · seuene ȝere there-after,
Drynke but myd the doke · and dyne but ones.

INUIDIA.

Enuye with heuy herte · asked after schrifte,
And carefullich *mea culpa* · he comsed to shewe.
He was as pale as a pelet · in the palsye he semed,
And clothed in a caurimaury · I couthe it nouȝte discreue;
In kirtel and kourteby · and a knyf bi his syde,
Of a freres frokke · were the forsleues.
And as a leke hadde yleye · longe in the sonne,
So loked he with lene chekes · lourynge foule.
His body was to-bolle for wratthe · that he bote his lippes,
And wryngynge he ȝede with the fiste · to wreke hymself he thouȝte
With werkes or with wordes · whan he seighe his tyme.
Eche a worde that he warpe · was of an addres tonge,
Of chydynge and of chalangynge · was his chief lyflode,
With bakbitynge and bismer · and beryng of fals witnesse;
This was al his curteisye · where that euere he shewed hym.
'I wolde ben yshryue,' quod this schrewe · 'and I for shame durst;
I wolde be gladder, bi god · that Gybbe had meschaunce,
Than thouȝe I had this woke ywonne · a weye of Essex chese.

Of a freris frokke · were the fore-sleuys.
As a leek that hedde i-leiȝen · longe in the sonne,
So loked he with lene chekes; · lourede he foule.
His bodi was bolled · for wraththe he bot his lippes.
Wrothliche he wrong his fust · he thouȝte him a-wreke
With werkes or with wordes · whon he seiȝ his tyme.
'Venim or vernisch · or vinegre, I trouwe,
Walleth in my wombe · or waxeth, ich wene.
I ne mihte mony day don · as a mon ouhte,
Such wynt in my wombe · waxeth, er I dyne.

From C. vii. 170–174.

[Thenne seide Lecherie 'alas!' · and to oure lady cryede,
'Lady, to thy leue sone · lowte for me nouthe,
That he haue pyte on me putour · of hus pure grace and mercy,
With that ich shal,' quath that shrewe · 'Saterdayes, for thy loue,
Drynke bote with the douke · and dyne bote ones.]

CONFESSIO INUIDIE.

Enuye with heuy herte · asked after shrifte,
And criede '*mea culpa*' · corsynge alle hus enemys.
Hus clothes were of corsement · and of kene wordes;

He wroth hus fust vp-on Wratthe · hadde he wysshes at wille,
Sholde no lyf lyuye · that on hus londe passede.

Chidynge and Ianglyng . that was hus chef lyflode,

A. 58. dyne TU; eten VH; *read* dynen. 63 64. *From* THU; V *omits these lines*. 73. dye (*for* dyne) V. **B**. 76. ſcrifte L. **C**. 68. Ianglenge P.

Ichaue a neihȝebor me neih · I haue anuyȝed him ofte,
Ablamed him be-hynde his bak · to bringe him in disclaundre,
And peired him bi my pouwer · i-punissched him ful ofte,
Bi-lowen him to lordes · to make him leose seluer,
I-don his frendes ben his fon · with my false tonge;
His grase and his good hap · greueth me ful sore.
Bitwene him and his meyne · ichaue i-mad wraththe,
Bothe his lyf and his leome · was lost thorw my tonge.
Whon I mette him in the market · that I most hate,
Ich heilede him as hendely · as I his frend weore.
He is douȝtiore then I · i dar non harm don him.
Bote hedde I maystrie and miht · I mortherde him for euere!
Whon I come to the churche · and knele bi-fore the roode,

I haue a neighbore neyȝe me · I haue ennuyed hym ofte,
And lowen on hym to lordes · to don hym lese his siluer,
And made his frendes ben his foon · thorw my false tonge;
His grace and his good happes · greueth me ful sore.
Bitwene many and many · I make debate ofte,
That bothe lyf and lyme · is lost thorw my speche.
And whan I mete him in market · that I moste hate,
I hailse hym hendeliche · as I his frende were;
For he is douȝtier than I · I dar do non other.
Ac hadde I maystrye and myȝte · god wote my wille!
And whan I come to the kirke · and sholde knele to the rode,
And preye for the poeple · as the prest techeth,
For pilgrimes and for palmers · for alle the poeple after,
Thanne I crye on my knees · that Cryste ȝif hem sorwe
That beren awey my bolle · and my broke schete.
Awey fro the auter thanne · turne I myn eyghen,
And biholde how Eleyne · hath a newe cote;
I wisshe thanne it were myne · and al the webbe after.
And of mennes lesynge I laughe · that liketh myn herte;
And for her wynnynge I wepe · and waille the tyme,
And deme that hij don ille · there I do wel worse;
Who-so vndernymeth me here-of · I hate hym dedly after.
I wolde that vche a wyght · were my knaue,
For who-so hath more than I · that angreth me sore.
And thus I lyue louelees · lyke a luther dogge,

And scholde preiȝe for the peple · as the prest vs techeth,
Thenne I crie vppon my knes · that Crist ȝiue hem serwe
That hath i-bore a-wei my bolle · and my brode schete.
From the auter I turne · myn eiȝe, and bi-holde
Hou Heyne hath a newe cote · and his wyf another;
Thenne I wussche hit weore myn · and al the web aftur.
Of his leosinge I lauhwe · hit liketh me in myn herte;
Ac for his wynnynge I wepe · and weile the tyme.
I deme men that don ille · and ȝit I do wel worse,
For I wolde that vch a wiht · in this world were mi knaue,
And who-so hath more thanne I · that angrith myn herte.
Thus I liue loueles · lyk a luther dogge,

[*Not in* C-*text.*]

A. 83. as—frend THU; his frend as I V. 97. *From* THU; V *omits this line.* B. 105. pople L; *see next line.* 108. beren W; baren C; bar L.

That al my breste bolleth · for bitter of my galle;
May no suger so swete · a-swagen hit vnnethe,
Ne no *diopendion* · dryue hit from myn herte;
3if schrift schulde hit thenne swopen out · a gret wonder hit were.'

That al my body bolneth · for bitter of my galle.

From **B.** xiii. 325–342.

[And blame men bihynde her bakke · and bydden hem meschaunce;
And that he wist bi Wille · tellen it Watte,
And that Watte wiste · Wille wiste it after,
And made of frendes foos · thorugh a false tonge,
'Or with my3te of mouthe · or thorugh mannes strengthe
Auenge me fele tymes · other frete my-selue
Wyth-inne, as a shepster shere' · I-shrewed men and cursed!
Cuius malediccione os plenum est, et amaritudine;
Sub lingua eius labor et dolor:
Et alibi: filij hominum, dentes eorum arma et sagitte,
Et lingua eorum gladius acutus:—
'There is no lyf that I louye · lastyng any while,
For tales that I telle · no man trusteth to me;
And whan I may nou3t haue the maistrye · with malencolye I take,
That I cacche the crompe · the cardiacle some tyme,
Or an ague in suche an angre · and some tyme a feure,
That taketh me al a twelfmoneth · tyl that I dispyse
Lechecrafte of owre lorde · and leue on a wicche,
And segge, that no clerke ne can · ne Cryste, as I leue,
To the souter of Southwerke · or of Shordyche dame Emme!
And segge, that no goddes worde · gaf me neuere bote,
But thorw a charme had I chaunce · and my chief hele!']

I my3te nou3te eet many 3eres · as a man ou3te,
For enuye and yuel wille · is yuel to defye;
May no sugre ne swete thinge · asswage my swellynge,
Ne no *diapenidion* · dryue it fro myne herte,
Ne noyther schrifte ne shame · but ho-so schrape my mawe?'
'3us, redili,' quod Repentaunce · and radde hym to the beste,
'Sorwe of synnes · is sauacioun of soules.'
'I am sori,' quod that segge · 'I am but selde other,
And that maketh me thus megre · for I ne may me venge.
Amonges burgeyses haue I be · dwellynge at Londoun,
And gert bakbitinge be a brocoure · to blame mennes ware.

A. 102. schrit V. **C.** 71. hit to wille P. 74. tymes IMSG;

'3us, rediliche,' quod Repentaunce · and radde him to goode,
'Serw for heore sunnes · saueth men ful monye.'
'Icham sori,' quod Envye · 'I ne am but seldene other,
And that maketh me so mad · for I ne may me venge.'

And blame men by-hynde hure bak · and bidde hem mes-
chaunce.
Al that he wiste by Wylle · to Watkyn he told hit,
And that he wiste by Watkyn · tolde hit Wille after;
And made foos of frendes · thorw fals and fykel tonge:
'Other thorw myghte of mouthe · other thorw meny sleyghthes
Venged me fele tymes · other brend my-self with-ynne
Lyke a shappesters sheres · and shrewede myn emcristyne,
Azens the consail of Crist · as clerkes fynden in bokes:
Cuius maledictione os plenum est et amaritudine et dolo: sub lingua eius labor et dolor.
Filij hominum, dentes eorum arma et sagitte, et lingua eorum gladius acutus.
Whenne ich ne may haue the maistrie · suche malancolie ich take,
That ich cacche the crampe · the cardiacle som tyme,
Other an ague in suche an angre · and som tyme a feuere,
That taketh me al a twelfmonthe · til that ich dispice
Leche-craft of oure lorde · and leyue on a wicche,
And sigge that no clerk can · ne Crist, as ich leyue,
To the souter of South-werk · such is hus 'grace.
For god, ne godes wordes · ne grace ne halp neuere,
Bote thorw a charme hadde ich a chaunce · and my chief hele.
Ich myghte nat ete meny 3er · as a man auhte,
For enuye and vuel wil · ys vuel to defye.
May no suger ne swete thyng · a-swage my swellynges,
Ne dereworthe drynke · dryuen hit fro myn herte,
Neyther shame ne shrift · bote ho so shraped my mawe?'
'3us, redilyche,' quath Repentaunce · 'and thow be ryght sory,
For thy synne soueraynliche · by-sechyng god of mercy.'
'Ich am euere sory,' sayde Enuye · 'ich am bote selde other;
That maketh me so megre · for ich ne may me auenge.
3ut am ich brocor of bakbytynge · and blame mennes ware
A-mong marchauns many tymes · nameliche in Londoun;

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tyme P. *For* brend *read* fret. 76. P om. *et dolo.* 80. twelfmonnthe P. 95. baggebytynge P.

[*Not in* **A**-*text*.]

Whan he solde and I nou3te · thanne was I redy
To lye and to loure on my neighbore · and to lakke his chaffare.

I wil amende this, 3if I may · thorw my3te of God almy3ty.'

IRA.

Now awaketh Wratthe · with two whyte eyen,
And nyuelynge with the nose · and his nekke hangynge.
'I am Wrath,' quod he · 'I was sum tyme a frere,
And the couentes gardyner · for to graffe ympes;
On limitoures and listres · lesynges I ymped,
Tyl thei bere leues of low speche · lordes to plese,
And sithen thei blosmed obrode · in boure to here shriftes.
And now is fallen ther-of a frute · that folke han wel leuere
Schewen her schriftes to hem · than shryue hem to her persones.

And now persones han parceyued · that freres parte with hem,
Thise possessioneres preche · and depraue freres,
And freres fyndeth hem in defaute · as folke bereth witnes,
That whan thei preche the poeple · in many place aboute,
I, Wrath, walke with hem · and wisse hem of my bokes.
Thus thei speken of spiritualte · that eyther despiseth other,
Til thei be bothe beggers · and by my spiritualte libben,
Or elles alle riche · and riden aboute.
I, Wrath, rest neuere · that I ne moste folwe
This wykked folke · for suche is my grace.
I haue an aunte to nonne · and an abbesse bothe,
Hir were leuere swowe or swelte · than soeffre any peyne.

B. 143. han. W; L. *om.* C. 111. me IMFEG; men P. grucched

[*Not in* A-*text.*]

Whanne he solde and ich noght · thenne was ich a-redy
To lye and to loury · and to lacke myn neghebores,
Here werkes, here wordes · wher-so ich sete.
Now hit a-thynketh me in thouht · that euere ich so wrouhte;
Lord, er ich lyf lete · for loue of thy-selue,
Graunte me, goode lorde · grace of amendement.'

CONFESSIO IRE.

Thenne a-waked Wratthe · with to white eyen,
With a nyuylynge nose · nyppyng hus lyppes.
'Ich am Wratthe,' quath that wye · 'wol gladliche smyte
Bothe with ston and with staf · and stele vp-on myn enemy;
For to slee hym slehliche · slehthes ich by-thenke.
Thauh ich sytte thys seuen ȝer · ich sholde nat wel telle
The harme that ich haue idon · with hand and with tonge.
Vnpacient in alle penaunces · and pleyned, as hit were,
On god, whenne me greued ouht · and grucched of hus sonde,
As, som tyme in somer · and al-so in heruest,
Bote ich hadde wedir at my wil · ich wited god the cause,
In alle manere angres · that ich hadde other felede.
A-monges alle manere men · my dwelling ys som tyme,
With lered and with lewede · that leef ben to hure
Harm of eny man · by-hynde other by-fore.
Freres folowen my vore · fele tyme and ofte,
And prouen vnparfit · prelates of holy churche;
And prelates pleynen of hem · for thei here parshenes shryuen
With-oute lycence and leue · and herby lyueth wratthe.
Thus thei speke and dispute · that eche dispiseth other.
Thus beggers and barouns · at debat aren ofte,
Til ich, Wratth, waxe an hyh · and walke with hem bothe;
Other til bothe be beggers · and by spiritualte lybben,
Or alle riche thus ride · rest shal ich nauht, Wratthe,
That ich ne mot folwy this folk · my fortune ys non other.
Ich haue an aunte to a nunne · and to an abbodesse;
Hem were leuere swouny other swelte · than suffry eny peyne.

IES; grucche P. 114. In IMFSG; And P. 116. leef FS; lef E; luf P.
118. folowen E; folewen M; folwen I; flowen P. 129. sounye (*for* swouny) P.

[*Not in* **A**-*text*.]

I haue be cook in hir kichyne · and the couent serued
Many monthes with hem · and with monkes bothe.
I was the priouresses potagere · and other poure ladyes,
And made hem ioutes of iangelynge · that dame Iohanne was a bastard,
And dame Clarice a kniȝtes douȝter · ac a kokewolde was hire syre,
And dame Peronelle a prestes file · priouresse worth she neuere,
For she had childe in chirityme · al owre chapitere it wiste.

Of wykked wordes I, Wrath · here wortes i-made,
Til 'thow lixte' and 'thow lixte' · lopen oute at ones,
And eyther hitte other · vnder the cheke;
Hadde thei had knyues, bi Cryst · her eyther had killed other.
Seynt Gregorie was a gode pope · and had a gode forwit,
That no priouresse were prest · for that he ordeigned.
Thei had thanne ben *infamis* the firste day · thei can so yuel hele conseille.

Amonge monkes I miȝte be · ac many tyme I shonye;
For there ben many felle frekis · my feres to aspye,
Bothe prioure an suppriour · and owre *pater abbas;*
And if I telle any tales · thei taken hem togyderes,
And do me faste Frydayes · to bred and to water,
And am chalanged in the chapitelhous · as I a childe were,
And baleised on the bare ers · and no breche bitwene;
For-thi haue I no lykyng · with tho leodes to wonye.
I ete there vnthende fisshe · and fieble ale drynke;
Ac other while, whan wyn cometh · whan I drynke wyn at eue,

I haue a fluxe of a foule mouthe · wel fyue dayes after.

C. 135. he (*for* hue) P; *see* l. 136. 138. lixt EIMFS; luxt P. 149.

[*Not in* A-*text.*]

Ich haue be cook in here kychene · and the couent serued
Meny monthes with hem · and with monkes bothe.
Ich was the prioresse potager · and other poure ladies,
And made here ioutes of iangles; · 'dame Iohane was a bastarde,
And dame Clarice a knyghtes douhter · a cokewold was hure syre,
Dame Purnele a prestes file · prioresse worth hue neuere;
For hue hadde a childe in the chapon-cote · hue worth chalenged at eleccion.'
Thus thei sitte, tho sustres · som tyme, and disputen,
Til 'thow lixt' and 'thow lixt' · be lady ouer hem alle;
And thenne a-wake ich, Wratthe · and wold be auenged.
Thanne ich crie and cracche · with my kene nailes,
Bothe byte and bete · and brynge forth suche thewes,
That alle ladies me lothen · that louen eny worschep.
Among wyues and wodewes · ich am ywoned sitte
Yparroked in puwes; · the person hit knoweth
How lytel ic louye · Letice at the style;
For hue hadde haly bred er ich · myn herte by-gan to chaunge.
After-ward after mete · hue and ich chidde,
And ich, Wratth, was war · and wroth on hem both,
Til aither cleped othere 'hore' · and of with the clothes,
Til bothe here heuedes were bar · and blody here chekes.
A-mong monkes myght ich be · ac meny tyme ich spare,
For ther beth meny felle frekus · myne afferes to aspye;
That ys, the priour and the suppriour · and oure *pater abbas.*
And yf ich telle eny tales · thei taken hem to-geders,
And don me faste Fridaies · to bred and to water.
ȝut am ich chalenged in chapitele-hous · as ich a childe were,
And baleysed on the bar ers · and no breche bytwyne.
Ich haue no lust, leyue me · to lenge a-mong monkes;
For hij eteth more fisch than flesh · and feble ale drynken.
Ac other-while whanne wyn cometh · and whenne ich drynke late,
Ich haue a flux of a foul mouth · wel fyf dayes after.

cleped—hore IMFSG; cliped oþere P. 157. in (*for* on) P. 159. drenken P; *see* l. 166.

[*Not in* **A**-*text*.]

Al the wikkednesse that I wote · bi any of owre bretheren
I couth it in owre cloistre · that al owre couent wote it.'
'Now repent the,' quod Repentaunce · 'and reherce thow neure
Conseille that thow cnowest · bi contenaunce ne bi riȝte;
And drynke nouȝte ouer delicatly · ne to depe noyther,
That thi wille bi cause ther-of · to wrath myȝte torne.
Esto sobrius,' he seyde · and assoilled me after,
And bad me wilne to wepe · my wikkednesse to amende.

From **B**. v. 72–75 (p. 134).

[Thanne Lecchoure seyde 'allas!' ·.and on owre lady he cryed,
To make mercy for his mis-dedes · bitwene god and his soule,
With that he shulde the Saterday · seuene ȝere there-after,
Drynke but myd the doke · and dyne but ones.]

From **B**. xiii. 344–352.

[With lykyng of lecherye · as by lokyng of his eye.
For vche a mayde that he mette · he made hir a signe
Semynge to synne-ward · and some tyme he gan taste
Aboute the mouth, or bynethe · begynneth to grope,
Tyl eytheres wille waxeth kene · and to the werke ȝeden,
As wel in fastyng-days and frydayes · and forboden nyȝtes;
And as wel in Lente as oute of Lente · alle tymes ylyche,
Suche werkes with hem · were neuer oute of sesoun;
Tyl thei myȝte namore · and thanne had merye tales.]

C. 166. dupe P. 178. made to hure P. 182. as IE; and P. 194. lecherous MF; lecherye P.

[*Compare* A. V. 54–58; p. 134.]

Al that ich wiste wickede · by eny of oure couent,
Ich cowede hit vp in oure cloistre · that al the couent wot hit.'
'Now repente the,' quath Repentaunce · 'and reherce neuere
What counsail that thow knowest · by contenaunce ne by speche.
And drynk nat ouer delicatliche · ne to depe neither,
That thy wil ne thy wit · to wratthe myghte turne.
Esto sobrius,' he seide · and a-soiled hym after,
And bad hym bidde to god · be hus help to amende.

CONFESSIO LUXURIE.

Thenne seide Lecherie 'alas!' · and to oure lady cryede,
'Lady, to thy leue sone · lowte for me nouthe,
That he haue pyte on me putour · of hus pure grace and mercy,
With that ich shal,' quath that shrewe · 'Saterdayes, for thy loue,
Drynke bote with the douke · and dyne bote ones.
Ich, gulty in gost · to god ich me shryue
As in lykynge of lecherie · my licames gultes,
In wordes, in wedes · in waitynge of eyen.
To eche maide that ich mette · ich made hure a sygne
Semynge to synne-warde · and somme gan ich taste
A-boute the mouthe, and by-nythe · by-gan ich to grope,
Til oure bothers wil was on; · to werke we ȝeden
As wel fastyngdaies as Frydaies · and heye-feste euenes,
As luf in lente as oute of lente · alle tymes liche—
Suche werkus with ous · were neuere out of seson—
Til we myghte no more; · thanne hadde we murye tales
Of puterie and of paramours · and proueden thorw speches,
Handlynge and halsynge · and al-so thorw cussynge
Excitynge oure aither other · til oure olde synne;
Sotilede songes · and sende out olde baudes
For to wynne to my wil · wommen with gyle;
By sorcerye som tyme · and som tyme by maistrye.
Ich lay by the louelokeste · and loued hem neuere after.
Whenne ich was old and hor · and hadde lore that kynde,
Ich had lykynge to lauhe · of lecherous tales.
Now, lord, for thy leaute · of lechours haue mercy!'

Thenne com Couetyse · I couthe him not discreue,
So hungri and so holewe · sire Herui him loked.
He was bitel-brouwed · with twei blered eiȝen,
And lyk a letherne pors · lullede his chekes;
In a toren tabart · of twelue wynter age;
But ȝif a lous couthe lepe · I con hit not i-leue
Heo scholde wandre on that walk · hit was so thred-bare.
'Ichaue ben couetous,' quod this caityf · 'I beknowe hit heere;
For sum tyme I seruede · Simme atte noke,

AUARICIA.

And thanne cam Coueytise · can I hym nouȝte descryue
So hungriliche and holwe · sire Heruy hym loked.
He was bitelbrowed · and baberlipped also,
With two blered eyghen · as a blynde hagge;
And as a letheren purs · lolled his chekes,
Wel sydder than his chyn · thei chiueled for elde;
And as a bondman of his bacoun · his berde was bidraueled.
With an hode on his hed · a lousi hatte aboue,
And in a tauny tabarde · of twelue wynter age,
Al totorne and baudy · and ful of lys crepynge;
But if that a lous couthe · haue lopen the bettre,
She sholde nouȝte haue walked on that welche · so was it thredebare.
'I haue ben coueytouse,' quod this caityue · 'I biknowe it here;
For some tyme I serued · Symme atte stile,
And was his prentis ypliȝte · his profit to wayte.
First I lerned to lye · a leef other tweyne,
Wikkedlich to weye · was my furst lessoun.
To Wy and to Wynchestre · I went to the faire,
With many manere marchandise · as my maistre me hiȝte;
Ne had the grace of gyle · ygo amonge my ware,
It had be vnsolde this seuene ȝere · so me god helpe!
Thanne drowe I me amonges draperes · my donet to lerne,
To drawe the lyser alonge · the lenger it semed;
Amonge the riche rayes . I rendred a lessoun,

B. 189. Heruy WO; Henri L. C. 197. an (*for* and) P. 200. Wel

And was his pliht prentys · his profyt to loke.
Furst I leornede to lyȝe · a lessun or tweyne,
And wikkedliche for to weie · was myn other lessun.
To Winchestre and to Wych · ich wente to the feire
With mony maner marchaundise · as my mayster hihte;
Bote nedde the grace of gyle · i-gon a-mong my ware,
Hit hedde ben vn-sold this seuen ȝer · so me god helpe!
Thenne I drouȝ me a-mong this drapers · my donet to leorne,
To drawe the lyste wel along · the lengore hit semede;
Among this riche rayes · lernde I a lessun,

CONFESSIO AUARICIE.

Thenne can Couetyse · ich can nat hym discryue,
So hongerliche and so holwe · Heruy hym-self lokede.
He was bytelbrowed and baberlupped · with two blery eyen,
And as a letherene pors · lollid hus chekus,
Wel sydder than hys chyn · ychiueled for elde:
As bondemenne bacon · hus berd was yshaue,
With hus hod on his heued · and hus hatte bothe;
In a toren tabarde · of twelue wynter age;

But ȝif a lous couthe lepe · I leue hit, as y trowe,
He scholde not wandre on that welch · so was hit threde-bare.

'Ich haue be coueitous,' quath this caityf · 'ich byknow hit here.
For som tyme ich serued · Symme at the style,
And was his prentys yplyght · hus profyt to waite.
Furst ich lerned to lye · a lesyng other tweye;
Wickedliche to weye · was my furst lesson.
To Wy and to Winchestre · ich wente to the faire
With many maner marchandises · as my maister heghte;
Ne hadde the grace of gyle · gon among my ware,
Hit hadde ben vnsold thys seuen ȝer · so me god helpe!
Ich drow me among drapers · my donet to lerne,
To drawe the lisure a-longe · the lenger it semed;
Among the riche rayes · ich rendered a lesson,

IMFSEG; Al P. 204, 205. *These lines are from* SIMFG; P. *om.* 212. P *om.* maner. maister MIFSEG; maistres P.

Brochede hem with a pak-neelde · and pletede hem togedere,
Putte hem in a pressour · and pinnede hem ther-inne
Til ten ȝerdes other twelue · tolden out threttene.
And my wyf at Westmunstre · that wollene cloth made,
Spak to the spinsters · for to spinne hit softe.
The pound that heo peysede by · peisede a quartrun more
Then myn auncel dude · whon I weyede treuthe.
I bouhte hire barly · heo breuh hit to sulle;
Peni-ale and piriwhit · heo pourede to-gedere
For laborers and louh folk · that liuen be hem-seluen.

To broche hem with a pak-nedle · and plaited hem togyderes,
And put hem in a presse · and pynned hem therinne,
Tyl ten ȝerdes or twelue · hadde tolled out threttene.
My wyf was a webbe · and wollen cloth made;
She spak to spynnesteres · to spynnen it oute.
Ac the pounde that she payed by · poised a quarteroun more
Than myne owne auncere · who-so weyȝed treuthe.
I bouȝte hir barly-malte · she brewe it to selle,
Peny-ale and podyng-ale · she poured togideres
For laborers and for low folke; · that lay by hym-selue.
The best ale lay in my boure · or in my bedchambre,
And who-so bummed ther-of · bouȝte it ther-after,
A galoun for a grote · god wote, no lesse;
And ȝit it cam in cupmel · this crafte my wyf vsed.
Rose the regratere · was hir riȝte name;
She hath holden hokkerye · al hire lyf-tyme.
Ac I swere now, so the ik · that synne wil I lete,
And neuere wikkedliche weye · ne wikke chaffare vse,
But wenden to Walsyngham · and my wyf als,
And bidde the rode of Bromeholme · brynge me oute of dette.'
'Repentedestow the euere,' quod Repentance · 'ne restitucioun madest?'
'ȝus, ones I was herberwed,' quod he · 'with an hep of chapmen,
I roos whan thei were arest · and yrifled here males.'

A. 131. by TU; VH *om.* pak-nedle WCO; bat-nedle L. 214. hadde WOC; L *om.* 142. sothely HTU; V *om.* **B.** 212. 213. pynned C; pynnede O; pyned L. 224. na L. 232. Repentedestow W;

The beste in the bed-chaumbre · lay bi the wowe,
Hose bummede therof · bouȝte hit ther-after,
A galoun for a grote · god wot, no lasse,
Whon hit com in cuppemel; · such craftes me vsede.
Rose the regratour · is hire rihte name;
Heo hath holden hoxterye · this elleuene wynter.
Bote I swere nou sothely · that sunne wol I lete,
And neuere wikkedliche weye · ne fals chaffare vsen,
Bote weende to Walsyngham · and my wyf alse,
And bidde the rode of Bromholm · bringe me out of dette.'

To brochen hem with a batte-nelde · and bond hem togederes;
Ich putte hem in pressours · and pynned hem therynne,
Tyl ten ȝerdes other twelue · tilled out threttyne.
My wif was a webbe · and wollen cloth made;
Hue spak to the spynnesters · to spynnen hit oute.
The pound that hue paiede hem by · peysed a quarter
More than myn auncel · whenne ich weied treuthe.
Ich bouhte hure barliche · hue brew hit to selle,
Peny-ale and podyng-ale · hue pourede to-geders,
For laborers and lowe folke · that laye by hem-selue.
The beste laye in my bour · and in my bed-chambre,
And who so bommede ther-of · he bouht yt ther-after,
A galon for a grote · and ȝut no grayth mesure,
Whanne it cam in coppe-mel; · this craft my wif vsede.
Rose the regratour · was hure ryght name;
Hue hath yholde hockerye · this eleuene wynter.'

'Repentest thow neuere?' quath Repentaunce · 'ne restitucion madest?'
'ȝus, ones,' quath he, 'ich was yherborwed · with an hep of chapmen;
Ich a-ros and rifled here males · whenne thei a reste were.'

Repentestow L. C. 220. ȝerdes IMFSE; ȝorde P. twlue (*sic*) P. 229. P *om.* who. 233. þes (*for* þis) P. 235. hue (*for* he) P.

[*Not in* A-*text.*]

'That was no restitucioun,' quod Repentance · 'but a robberes thefte,
Thow haddest be better worthy · be hanged therfore
Than for al that · that thow hast here shewed.'
'I wende ryflynge were restitucioun,' quod he · 'for I lerned neuere rede on boke,
And I can no Frenche in feith · but of the ferthest ende of Norfolke.'
'Vsedestow euere vsurie,' quod Repentaunce · 'in alle thi lyf-tyme?'
'Nay, sothly,' he seyde · 'saue in my ȝouthe.
I lerned amonge Lumbardes · and Iewes a lessoun,
To wey pens with a peys · and pare the heuyest,
And lene it for loue of the crosse · to legge a wedde and lese it;
Suche dedes I did wryte · ȝif he his day breke.
I haue mo maneres thorw rerages · than thorw *miseretur et comodat.*
I haue lent lordes · and ladyes my chaffare,
And ben her brocour after · and bouȝte it my-self.
Eschaunges and cheuesances · with suche chaffare I dele,
And lene folke that lese wol · a lyppe at euery noble.
And with Lumbardes lettres · I ladde golde to Rome,
And toke it by taille here · and tolde hem there lasse.'
'Lentestow euere lordes · for loue of her mayntenaunce?'
'ȝe, I haue lent lordes · loued me neuere after,
And haue ymade many a knyȝte · bothe mercere and drapere,
That payed neuere for his prentishode · nouȝte a peire gloues.'
'Hastow pite on pore men · that mote nedes borwe?'
'I haue as moche pite of pore men · as pedlere hath of cattes,
That wolde kille hem, yf he cacche hem myȝte · for coueitise of here skynnes.'
'Artow manlyche amonge thi neiȝbores · of thi mete and drynke?'
'I am holden,' quod he, 'as hende · as hounde is in kychyne,
Amonges my neighbores, namelich · such a name ich haue.'

[*Not in* A-*text.*]

'That was a reufol restitucion' · quath Repentaunce, 'for sothe;

Thow wolt hongy heye ther-fore · her other in helle!

Vsedest thow euere vserie · in al thy lyf-tyme?'

'Nay, sothliche,' he sayde · 'saf in my 3outhe.
Ich lerned among Lumbardes · a lesson, and of Iewes,
To weie pans with a peis · and pared the heuyeste,
And lente for loue of the wed · the whiche ich let betere,
And more worth than the moneye · other men that ich lenede.

Ich lenede folk that lese wolde · a lippe in eche noble,
And with Lombardes letters · ich lenede gold at Rome;
So what bern of me borwed · he bouhte the tyme.'
'Lenedest thow euere to eny lorde · for loue of menteynaunce?'
'Ich haue ylent to lordes and to ladies · that louede me neure after.
Ich haue mad meny a knyght · bote mercer and draper,
Payede neuere for here prentishode · nauht a payre gloues;
That chaffared with my chyuesaunce · cheuede selde after.'

B. 236. L *omits the former* be. 253. Lentestow; Lenestow L. C. 240. hue (*for* he) P. 250. P *om.* a. 251. payere P.

[*Not in* **A**-*text*.]

'Now god leue neure," quod Repentance · 'but thow repent the rather,
The grace on this grounde · thi good wel to bisette,
Ne thine ysue after the · haue Ioye of that thow wynnest,
Ne thi excecutours wel bisett · the siluer that thow hem leuest;
And that was wonne with wronge · with wikked men be despended.

From **B.** xiii. 362–368.

[And menged his marchaundyse · and made a good moustre;—
The worste with-in was · a gret witte I lete hit;
And if my neighbore had any hyne · or any beste elles
More profitable than myne · many sleightes I made,
How I myȝte haue it · al my witte I caste,
And but I it had by other waye · atte laste I stale it,
Or pryuiliche his purse shoke · vnpiked his lokkes.]

From **B.** xiii. 371–375.

[ȝif I ȝede to the plow · I pynched so narwe,
That a fote-londe or a forwe · fecchen I wolde,
Of my nexte neighbore · nymen of his erthe;
And if I rope, ouer-reche · or ȝaf hem red that ropen
To seise to me with her sikel·that I ne sewe neure.]

From **B.** xiii. 384–389.

[In halydayes at holicherche · whan ich herde masse,
Hadde I neuere wille, wot god · witterly to biseche
Mercye for my mysdedes · that I ne morned more
For losse of gode, leue me · than for my lykames giltes;
As, if I had dedly synne done · I dred nouȝt that so sore
As when I lened and leued it lost · or longe ar it were payed.]

From **B.** xiii. 392–399.

[And if I sent ouer see · my seruauntz to Bruges,
Or in-to Pruslonde my prentys · my profit to wayten,
To marchaunden with monoye · and maken her eschaunges,
Miȝte neuere me conforte · in the mene tyme
Noither messe ne matynes · ne none manere siȝtes,
Ne neuere penaunce perfourned · ne *pater-noster* seyde,
That my mynde ne was more · on my gode, in a doute,
Than in the grace of god · and his grete helpes:
Vbi thesaurus tuus, ibi et cor tuum.

C. 255 ayeres P. 265. oþer wey IMFSG; oþes a-way PE.

[*Not in* A-*text.*]

'Now redelich,' quath Repentaunce · 'and by the rode, ich leyue,
Shal neuere executor wel by-sette · the suluer that thow hym leuest,
Ne thyn ayres, as ich hope · haue ioye of that thow wan.
For the pope and alle hus penetauncers · power hem faylleth,
To a-soyle the of thy synnes · *sine restitutione;*
Nunquam dimittitur peccatum, nisi restituatur ablatum.'
'With false wordes and wittes · ich haue wonne my goodes,
And with gyle and glosynge · gadered that ich haue,
Meddled my marchaundise · and mad a good moustre;
The werst lay with-ynne · a gret wit ich let hit.
And yf my neyhȝebore hadde an hyne · other eny best ellys
More profitable than myn · ich made meny wentes,
How ich myght haue hit · al my wit ich caste.
And bote ich hadde hit by other wey · atte laste ich stal hit,
Other pryuyliche hus pors shok · vnpiked hus lokes.
And yf ich ȝede to the plouh · ich pynchede on hus half-acre,
That a fot-londe other a forwe · fecchen ich wolde,
Of my neyhȝeboris next · nymen of hus erthe.
And yf y repe, ouere-reche · other ȝaf hem red that repen
To sese to me with here sykel : that ich sew neuere.
In halydayes at holy churche · whenne ich hurde messe,
Ich hadde neuere wil witerlich · to by-seche mercy
For my mysdedes · that ich ne mornede ofter
For lost of good, leyue me · then for lycames gultes.
Thauh ich dedliche synne dude · ich dradde hit nat so sore
As whenne ich lenede and leyuede hit lost · other longe er hit were paied.
And yf ich sente ouer see · my seruaunt to Brugges,
Other in-to Prus my prentys · my profit to a-waite,
To marchaunde with monye · and maken here eschaunge,
Myghte neuere man comforty me · in the meyn tyme,
Neither matyns ne masse · ne othere manere syghtes,
And neuere penaunse performede · ne *pater-noster* seyde,
That my mynde ne was · more in my goodes
Than in godes grace · and hus grete myghte.
Ubi thesaurus tuus, ibi et cor tuum.'

273. P *om.* wil. 278. P *om.* ich. 285. P om. *et.*

[*Not in* **A**-*text.*]

For were I frere of that hous · there gode faith and charite is,
I nolde cope vs with thi catel · ne owre kyrke amende,
Ne haue a peny to my pitaunce · of thyne, bi my soule hele,
For the best boke in owre hous · theiȝe brent golde were the leues,
And I wyst wytterly · thow were suche as thow tellest,
Or elles that I kouthe knowe it · by any kynnes wise.
Seruus es alterius · cum fercula pinguia queris,
Pane tuo pocius · vescere, liber eris.
Thow art an vnkynde creature · I can the nouȝte assoille,
Til thow make restitucioun · and rekne with hem alle,
And sithen that resoun rolle it · in the regystre of heuene,
That thow hast made vche man good · I may the nouȝte assoille;
Non dimittitur peccatum · donec restituatur ablatum, etc.
For alle that haue of thi good · haue god my trouthe!
Ben holden at the heighe dome · to helpe the to restitue.

And who so leueth nouȝte this be soth · loke in the sauter glose,
In *miserere mei deus* · where I mene treuthe,
Ecce enim veritatem dilexisti, etc.
Shal neuere werkman in this worlde · thryue wyth that thow wynnest;
Cum sancto sanctus eris · construe me that on Englische.'
Thanne wex that shrewe in wanhope · and walde haue hanged him-self,
Ne hadde Repentaunce the rather · reconforted hym in this manere,
'Haue mercye in thi mynde · and with thi mouth biseche it,
For goddes mercye is more · than alle hisē other werkes;
Misericordia eius super omnia opera eius, etc.

From **B.** v. 463–466.
[And ȝete wil I ȝelde aȝein · if I so moche haue,
Al that I wikkedly wan · sithen I wytte hadde.
And though my liflode lakke · leten I nelle
That eche man ne shal haue his · ar I hennes wende.]

B. 272. tellest WCRO; telleth L. 273. *From* C; LWRO *omit this line.* 280. *For the former* haue, *as in* C, L *has* hath. 281. Ben WCO; Is L.

[*Compare* A. V. 236–239.]

'Now redeliche,' quath Repentaunce · 'ich haue reuthe of thy lyuynge.
Were ich a frere, in good faith · for al the gold on erthe
Ich nolde cope me with thy catell · ne oure kirke amende,
Ne take a meles mete of thyne · and myn herte hit wiste
That thow were such as thow seist; · ich sholde rathere sterue:
Melius est mori quam male uiuere.
Ich rede no faithful frere · at thy feste sytte;
3ut were me leuere, by oure lord · lyue by welle-carses
Than haue my fode and my fyndynge · of false menne wynnynges:
Seruus es alterius · cum fercula pinguia queris,
Pane tuo potius · uescere, liber eris.
Thow art an vnkynde creature · ich can the nat assoyle
Tyl thow haue ymad, by thy myght · to alle men restitucion;
For alle that hauen of thy good · (haue god my treuthe!)
Beeth holden at the hye dome · to helpe the restitue.
The preest that thy tythe taketh · trowe ich non other,
Shal parte with the in purgatorie · and help paye thy dette,
Yf he wist thow were suche · when he reseyuyde thyn offrynge.
What lede leyueth that ich lye · loke in the sauter glosed
On *ecce enim ueritatem dilexisti.*
Ther he shal wite witerliche · what vsure is to mene,
And what penaunce the prest shal haue · that prout is of thi tythes.
For an hore of hure ers-wynnynge · may hardiloker tythe
Than an erraunt vsurer · (haue god my treuthe!)
And erest shal come to heuene · by Cryst that me made!'
Then was ther a Walishman · was wonderliche sory,
He highte '3yuan 3eld-a3eyn- · if-ich-so-moche-haue,
Al that ich wickeddelich wan · sytthen ich wit hadde;
And thauh my liflode lacke · leten ich nelle,
That ech man shal haue hus · er ich hennes wende.
For me ys leuere in this lif · as a lorel beggen,
Than in lysse to lyue · and lese lyf and soule.'

C. 288. kirke IMF; churche P. 291. faitthful P. 292. carses EG; carsus S; cresses I; carse P. 294. *fercucula* P. 296. ert P. 305. þi tiþus F; his tiþes MS; þe tethes P; *read* þi tythes. 311. wit G; witt E; wyt S; witte I; hit PMF.

[Robert the robbour · on *Reddite* he lokede,
And for ther nas not wher-with · he wepte ful sore.
But ȝit the sunfol schrewe · seide to him-seluen :
'Crist, that vppon Caluarie · on the cros diȝedest,
Tho Dismas my brother · bisouȝte the of grace,
And heddest merci of that mon · for *memento* sake,
Thi wille worth vppon me · as ich haue wel deseruet
To haue helle for euere · ȝif that hope neore.
So rewe on me, Robert · that no red haue,

From **A.** v. 242–250.

[Robert the robbere · on *reddite* lokede,
And for ther was nouȝte wher-of · he wepe swithe sore.
Ac ȝet the synful schrewe · seyde to hym-selue,
'Cryst, that on Caluarye · vppon the crosse deydest,
Tho Dismas my brother · bisouȝte ȝow of grace,
And haddest mercy on that man · for *memento* sake,
So rewe on this robbere · that *reddere* ne haue,
Ne neuere wene to wynne · with crafte that I owe.
But for thi mykel mercy · mitigacioun I biseche;
Ne dampne me nouȝte at domesday · for that I did so ille.'
What bifel of this feloun · I can nouȝte faire schewe,
Wel I wote he wepte faste · water with bothe his eyen,
And knowleched his gult · to Cryst ȝete eftsones,
That *penitencia* his pyke · he schulde polsche newe, . . .
For he had leyne bi *Latro* · Luciferes aunte.]

From **B.** v. 469–484.

And al the wikkednesse in this worlde · that man myȝte worche or thynke,
Ne is no more to the mercye of god · than in the see a glede;

Omnis iniquitas quantum ad misericordiam dei, est quasi sintilla in medio maris.

For-thi haue mercy in thi mynde · and marchandise, leue it,

B. 291. *quasi* WCOR; L *om.*

Ne neuere weene to wynne · for craft that I knowe.
Bote for thi muchel merci · mitigacion I beseche;
Dampne me not on domes day · for I dude so ille.'
From A. v. 251–259. Ak what fel of this feloun · I con not feire schewe,
But wel ich wot he wepte fast · water with his eiȝen,
And knouhlechede his gult · to Crist ȝit eft-sones,
That *Penitencia* is pike · he schulde polissche newe,
And lepe with him ouerlond · al his lyf-tyme,
For he hath leiȝen bi *Latro* · Lucifers brother.]

Roberd the ryfeler · on *reddite* lokede,
And for ther was nat wher-with · he wepte ful sore;
And ȝut that synful shrewe · seide to heuene,
'Crist, that on Caluarye · on the croys deidest,
Tho Dismas my brother · by-souhte the of grace,
And haddest mercy on that man · for *memento* sake,
So rewe on me, Roberd · that *reddere* ne haue,
Ne neuere wene to wynne · with craft that ich knowe.
For thy muchel mercy · mytigacion ich by-seche,
Dampne me nouht at domys day · for that ich dude so ille.'
What by-fel of this felon · ich can nouht faire shewe;
Wel ich wot he wepte faste · water with hus eyen,
And to Crist knowlechede · hus coupe ȝut eft-sone,
That penaunce hus pyk-staf · he wolde polische newe,
For he hadde leye by *Latro* · Lucifers aunte.
'By the rode,' quath Repentaunce · 'thow romest toward heuene,
By so that hit be in thyn herte · as ich hure thy tonge.
Trist in his mochel mercy · and ȝut myght thow be saued.
For al the wrecchednesse of this worlde · and wicked dedes
Fareth as a fonk of fuyr · that ful a-myde Temese,
And deide for a drop of water; · so doth alle synnes
Of alle manere men · that with good wille
Confessen hem and crien mercy · shullen neuere come in helle.
Omnis iniquitas quoad misericordiam dei est quasi sintilla in medio maris.
Repente the anon,' quath Repentaunce · ryȝt so to the vsurer,
'And haue hus mercy in thy mynde · and marchaundise, leue hit;

C. 323. kowe (*for* knowe) P. 333. an P. 340. P *puts* haue *after* mynde.

Nou ginneth the Gloton · for to go to schrifte,
And carieth him to chircheward · his schrift forte telle.
Thenne Betun the breustere · bad him gode morwe,
And seththen heo asked of him · 'whoder that he wolde?'
'To holi chirche,' quod he · 'for to here masse,
And seththen I-chule ben I-schriuen · and sunge no more.'
'Ic haue good ale, gossib,' quod heo · 'Gloten, woltou asaye?'

For thow hast no good grounde · to gete the with a wastel,
But if it were with thi tonge · or ellis with thi two hondes.
For the good that thow hast geten · bigan al with falsehede,
And as longe as thow lyuest ther-with · thow ȝeldest nouȝte, but borwest.
And if thow wite neuere to whiche · ne whom to restitue,
Bere it to the bisschop · and bidde hym of his grace,
Bisette it hym-selue · as best is for thi soule.
For he shal answere for the · at the heygh dome,
For the and for many mo · that man shal ȝif a rekenynge.
What he lerned ȝow in lente · leue thow none other,
And what he lent ȝow of owre lordes good · to lette ȝow fro synne.'

GULA.

Now bigynneth glotoun · for to go to schrifte,
And kaires hym to-kirke-ward · his coupe to schewe.
Ac Beton the brewestere · bad hym good morwe,
And axed of hym with that · whiderward he wolde.
'To holi cherche,' quod he · 'forto here masse,
And sithen I wil be shryuen · and synne namore.'
'I haue gode ale, gossib,' quod she · 'Glotown, wiltow assaye?'
'Hastow auȝte in thi purs · any hote spices?'
'I haue peper and piones,' quod she · 'and a pounde of garlike,
A ferthyngworth of fenel-seed · for fastyngdayes.'
Thanne goth Glotoun in · and grete othes after;
Cesse the souteresse · sat on the benche,
Watte the warner · and his wyf bothe,
Tymme the tynkere · and tweyne of his prentis,

B. 312. she W; sche OR; he L. C. 343. bote þow P. 344. to IMFSG; þow sholde P. 345. bid IMF; bidde E; bide P. 351.

'Hastou ou3t i thi pors,' quod he · 'eny hote spices?'
'3e, Glotun, gossip,' quod heo · 'god wot, ful goode;
I haue peper and piane · and a pound of garlek,
A ferthing-worth of fenel-seed · for this fastyng dayes.'
Thene geth Gloton in · and grete othus after;
Sesse the souters wyf · sat on the benche,
Watte the warinar · and his wyf bothe,
Tomkyn the tinkere · and tweyne of his knaues,

For thow hast no good, by good faith! · to bygge the with a wastell.
The good that thow hauest ygete · by-gan al with falshede;
As longe as thow lyuest ther-with · thow 3eldest nat, bote borwest.
And yf thow wite neuere to wham · ne where to restitue,
Bere hit to the bischop · and bid hym of hus grace,
To by-setten hit hym-selue · as best be for thy soule;
For he shal answere for the · at the hye dome,
For the and for meny mo · that man shal 3eue rekenynge,
What he lerede 3ow to lyue with · and to lette 3ow fro thufthe.'

CONFESSIO GULE.

Now by-gynneth Gloton · for to go to shryfte,
And kayres hym to-kirke-ward · hus coupe to shewe.
Fastyng on a Fryday · forth gan he wende
By Betone hous the brewestere · that bad hym good morwe,
And whederwarde he wolde · the brew-wif hym asked.
'To holy churche,' quath he · 'for to hure masse,
And sitthen sitte and be yshriuen · and synwe namore.'
'Ich haue good ale, godsyb · Gloton, wolt thow assaye?'
'What hauest thow,' quath he · 'eny hote spices?'
'Ich haue piper and pionys · and a pound of garlik,
A ferthyng-worth of fynkelsede · for fastinge-daies.'
Thenne goth Gloton yn · and grete othes after.
Sesse the sywestere · sat on the benche,
Watte the warynere · and hus wif dronke,
Thomme the tynkere · and tweye of hus knaues,

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kirke IMF; churche P. 356. yschreuen P. 360. fertheng P. 361. an (*for* and) P.

Hikke the hakeney mon · and Hogge the neldere,
Clarisse of Cokkes lone · and the clerk of the churche,
Sire Pers of Pridye · and Pernel of Flaundres,
Dauwe the disschere · and a doseyn othere.
A ribibor, a ratoner · a rakere of Chepe,
A ropere, a redyng-kyng · and Rose the disschere,
Godfrei of Garlesschire · and Griffin the Walsche,
And of vp-holders an hep · erly bi the morwe
ȝiue the Gloton with good wille · good ale to honsel.
Thenne Clement the cobelere · caste of his cloke,
And atte newe feire · he leyde hire to sulle;
And Hikke the ostiler · hutte his hod aftur,

Hikke the hakeneyman · and Hughe the nedeler,
Clarice of Cokkeslane · and the clerke of the cherche,
Dawe the dykere · and a dozeine other;
Sire Piers of Pridie · and Peronelle of Flaundres,
A ribibour, a ratonere · a rakyer of Chepe,
A ropere, a redyngkyng · and Rose the dissheres,
Godfrey of Garlekehithe · and Gryfin the Walshe,
And vpholderes an hepe · erly bi the morwe
Geuen glotoun with glad chere · good ale to hansel.

Clement the cobelere · cast of his cloke,
And atte new faire · he nempned it to selle;
Hikke the hakeneyman · hitte his hood after,
And badde Bette the bochere · ben on his side.
There were chapmen y-chose · this chaffare to preise;
Who-so haueth the hood · shuld haue amendes of the cloke.

Two risen vp in rape · and rouned togideres,
And preised these penyworthes · apart bi hem-selue;
Thei couth nouȝte bi her conscience · acorden in treuthe,
Tyl Robyn the ropere · arose bi the southe,
And nempned hym for a noumpere · that no debate nere,
For to trye this chaffare · bitwixen hem thre.
Hikke the hostellere · hadde the cloke,

A. 165. A TU; And V. a TU; the V. 182. *This line is in* H *only.*

And bad Bette the bocher · ben on his bi-syde.
Ther weore chapmen i-chose · the chaffare to preise;
Hose hedde the hod · schulde haue amendes.
Thei risen vp raply · and rouneden to-gedere,
And preiseden the peniworthus · and parteden bi hemseluen;
Ther weoren othes an hep · hose that hit herde.
Thei couthe not bi heore concience · a-corde to-gedere,
Til Robyn the ropere · weore rad forte a-ryse,
And nempned for a noumpere · that no de-bat neore,
For he schulde preise the penyworthes · as hym good thoȝt.
Thenne Hikke the ostiler · hedde the cloke,

Hicke the hakeneyman · and Houwe the neldere,
Claryce of Cockeslane · the clerk of the churche,
Syre Peeres of Prydie · and Purnel of Flaundres,
An haywarde and an heremyte · the hangeman of Tyborne,
Dauwe the dykere · with a dosen harlotes
Of portours and of pykeporses · and pylede toth-drawers,
A rybibour and a ratoner · a rakere and hus knaue,
A ropere and a redyngkynge · and Rose the disshere,
Godefray the garlek-mongere · and Griffyn the Walish;
And of vp-holders an hep · erly by the morwe
Geuen Gloton with glad chere · good ale to hansele.
Clemment the cobelere · cast of hus cloke,
And to the newe fayre · nempned hit to selle.
Hicke the hakeneyman · hitte hus hod after,
And bad Bette the bouchere · to be on hus syde.
Ther were chapmen y-chose · the chaffare to preise;
That he that hadde the hod · sholde nat habbe the cloke;
The betere thyng, by arbytours · sholde bote the werse.
Two rysen rapliche · and rounede to-geders,
And preysed the penyworthes · apart by hem-selue,
And ther were othes an hepe · for other sholde haue the werse.
Thei couthe nouht by here conscience · a-corde for treuthe,
Tyl Robyn the ropere · aryse thei bysouhte,
And nempned hym a nompeyr · that no debate were.
Hicke the hakeneyman · hadde the cloke,

B. 338. *From* OC; L *omits this line.* **C.** 365. P *om.* þe *after* Hicke. 370. pykeporeses P. 375. chire P. 377. nywe P. 379. þe IMFSE; P *om.*

In couenaunt that Clement · schulde the cuppe fulle,
And habbe Hikkes hod the ostiler · and hold him wel iseruet;
And he that repenteth rathest · schulde arysen aftur,
And greten sir Gloten · with a galun of ale.
Ther was lauȝwhing and lotering · and 'let go the cuppe;'
Bargeyns and beuerages · bi-gonne to aryse,
And seeten so til euensong · and songen sum while,
Til Gloten hedde i-gloupet · a galoun and a gille.
He pissede a potel · in a *pater-noster*-while,
And bleuh the ronde ruwet · atte rugge-bones ende,
That alle that herde the horn · heolden heore neose after,

In couenaunte that Clement · shulde the cuppe fille,
And haue Hikkes hode hostellere · and holde hym yserued;
And who-so repented rathest · shulde arise after,
And grete sire Glotoun · with a galoun ale.
There was laughyng and louryng · and 'let go the cuppe,'
And seten so til euensonge · and songen vmwhile,
Tyl Glotoun had y-globbed · a galoun an a Iille.
His guttis gunne to gothely · as two gredy sowes;
He pissed a potel · in a *pater-noster*-while,
And blew his rounde ruwet · at his rigge-bon ende,
That alle that herde that horne · held her nose after,
And wissheden it had be wexed · with a wispe of firses.
He myȝte neither steppe ne stonde · er he his staffe hadde;
And thanne gan he go · liche a glewmannes bicche,
Somme tyme aside · and somme tyme arrere,
As who-so leyth lynes · forto lacche foules.
And whan he drowgh to the dore · thanne dymmed his eighen,
He stumbled on the thresshewolde · an threwe to the erthe.
Clement the cobelere · cauȝte hym bi the myddel,
For to lifte hym alofte · and leyde him on his knowes;
Ac Glotoun was a gret cherle · and a grym in the liftynge,
And coughed vp a caudel · in Clementis lappe;

A. 199. lacche TU; cacche VH. 202–207. *These lines are in* U *only.*
B. 347. gothely C; gotheli O; gothelen W; godly L. 357. stumbled WCO; trembled L. **C.** 400. rywett P. atte þe P. 401. þat G; þan P; þe IMFE; his S. 402. þat hit hadde P. 403. stonnde P. 404. hue

And weschte that hit weore i-wipet · with a wesp of firsen.
He hedde no strengthe to stonde · til he his staf hedde;
Thenne gon he for to go · lyk a gleo-monnes bicche,
Sum tyme asyde · and sum tyme arere,
As hose leith lynes · to lacche with foules.
Whon he drouh to the dore · then dimmede his eiȝen,
He thrompelde atte threxwolde · and threuh to the grounde.
Clement the coblere · cauȝte Glotoun by the mydle,
And for to lyfte hym aloft · leide hym on his knees;
And Glotoun was a gret cherl · and grym in the lyftynge,
And cowhede vp a cawdel · in Clementis lappe,

In couenaunt that Clemment · sholde the coppe fylle,
And haue the hakeneymannes hod · and hold hym y-serued;
And who repentyde rathest · shold aryse after,
And grete syre Gloton · with a galon of ale.
Ther was lauhyng & lakeryng · and 'let go the coppe!'
Bargeynes and beuereges · by-gunne to aryse,
And setyn so til euesong rang · and songe vmbwhyle,
Til Gloton hadde yglobbed · a galon and a gylle.
Hus guttes gonne godely · as two gredy sowes;
He pissede a potell · in a *pater-noster*-while,
And blew hus rounde rewet · atte rygbones ende,
That alle that herde that horne · hulde here nose after,
And wusched hit hadde be wexed · with a wips of breres.
He myghte nother stappe ne stonde · tyl he a staf hadde.
Thanne gan he go · lyke a glemannes bycche,
Som tyme asyde · and som tyme a-rere,
As ho so laith lynes · for to lacche foules.
And whenne he drow to the dore · thanne dymmed hus eyen;
He thrumbled at the threshefold · and threw to the erthe.
Tho Clement the cobelere · cauhte hym by the mydel,
For to lyfte hym on loft · he leyde hym on hus knees;
Ac Gloton was a gret cherl · and gronyd in the liftynge,
And couhed vp a caudel · in Clementes lappe;

(*for* he) P. 405. P *om.* and. 408. thrumbled I; thromlide G; stomblede PE. þrew SIF; þreu P. 410. leyde I; leide MFG; ledde PES. 411. in IMSG; on P.

That the hungriest hound · of Hertforde schire
Ne durst lape of that laueyne · so vnloveli it smakith.
That with al the wo of this world · his wyf and his wenche
Beeren him hom to his bed · and brouhten him ther-inne.
And after al this surfet · an accesse he hedde,

Is non so hungri hounde · in Hertford schire
Durst lape of the leuynges · so vnlouely thei smauȝte.
With al the wo of this worlde · his wyf and his wenche
Baren hym home to his bedde · and brouȝte hym therinne.
And after al this excesse · he had an accidie,
That he slepe Saterday and Sonday · til sonne ȝede to reste.
Thanne waked he of his wynkyng · and wiped his eyghen;
The fyrste worde that he warpe · was, 'where is the bolle?'
His wif gan edwite hym tho · how wikkedlich he lyued,

And Repentance riȝte so · rebuked hym that tyme:
'As thow with wordes and werkes · hast wrouȝte yuel in thi lyue,
Shryue the and be shamed ther-of · and shewe it with thi mouth.'
'I, Glotoun,' quod the gome · 'gylti me ȝelde,
That I haue trespassed with my tonge · I can nouȝte telle how ofte,
Sworen 'goddes soule' · and 'so god me help and halidom,'
There no nede ne was · nyne hundreth tymes;
And ouer-seye me at my sopere · and some tyme at nones,

From B. xiii. 404. [And more mete ete and dronke · then kende miȝt defie,]

That I Glotoun girt it vp · er I hadde gone a myle,
And y-spilte that myȝte be spared · and spended on somme hungrie;

A. 213. was TH; V *om.* **B.** 370. wif WO; witte L. **C.** 414. þat IMFSEG; þe P. 417. excesse IMFSE; excessus P. 422. an (*for*

That he slepte Seturday and Sonenday · til sonne wente to reste.
Thenne he wakede of his wynk · and wypede his eiȝen;
The furste word that he spac was · 'wher is the cuppe?'
His wyf warnede him tho · of wikkednesse and of sinne.
Thenne was he a-schomed, that schrewe · and schraped his eren,

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Ys non so hongry hounde · in Hertforde-shire,
That thorst lape of that leuynge · so vnloueliche hit smauhte.
With al the wo of the worlde · hus wif and hus wenche
Bere hym to hus bedde · and brouhte hym ther-ynne;
And after al this excesse · he hadde an accidie,
He slep Saterday and Sonday · tyl sonne ȝede to reste.
Thenne awakyde he wel wan · and wolde haue ydronke;
The ferst-word that he spak · was 'ho halt the bolle?'
Hus wif and hys inwit · edwited hym of hus synne;
He wax a-shamed, that shrewe · and shrof hym al-so swithe
To Repentaunce ryȝt thus; · 'haue reuthe on me,' he seyde,
'Thow lord that on loft art · and alle lyues shope!
To the, god, ich Gloton · gulty me ȝelde
Of my trespas with tunge · ich can nauht telle how ofte,
Sworen 'thy saule and thy sydes' · and 'so help me, god almyghty!'
When that no ned was · meny tyme falsliche.
And ouer-sopede at my soper · and som tyme at nones

More than my kynde · myghte wel defye;
And as an hounde that et gras · so gan ich to brake,
And spilde that ich spele myghte · ich can nouht speke for shame
The vylenye of my foule mouthe · and of my foule mawe.

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and) P. 425. gulty ich me P. 427. P *om. 2nd* þy. 428. ned MS; nede IFE; nud P. 431. ete P. 432. spele IFS; spelide P.

And gon to grede grimliche · and gret deol to make
For his wikkede lyf · that he i-liued hedde.
'For hungur other for furst · I make myn a-vou,

Ouerdelicatly on fastyng-dayes · drunken and eten bothe,
And sat some tyme so longe there · that I slepe and ete at ones.
For loue of tales in tauernes · to drynke the more, I dyned,
And hyed to the mete er none · whan fastyng-dayes were.'
'This shewyng shrifte,' quod Repentance · 'shal be meryte to the.'
And thanne gan Glotoun grete · and gret doel to make
For his lither lyf · that he lyued hadde,
And avowed to fast— · 'for hunger or for thurst
Shal neuere fisshe on the Fryday · defien in my wombe,
Tyl Abstinence myn aunte · haue ȝiue me leue;
And ȝit haue I hated hir · al my lyf-tyme.'

ACCIDIA.

Thanne come Sleuthe al bislabered · with two slymy eiȝen:
'I most sitte,' seyde the segge · 'or elles shulde I nappe;
I may nouȝte stonde ne stoupe · ne with-oute a stole knele.
Were I brouȝte abedde · but if my taille-ende it made,
Sholde no ryngynge do me ryse · ar I were rype to dyne.'
He bygan *benedicite* with a bolke · and his brest knocked,
And roxed and rored · and rutte atte laste.
'What! awake, renke!' quod Repentance · 'and rape the to shrifte.'
'If I shulde deye bi this day · me liste nouȝte to loke;
I can nouȝte perfitly my *pater-noster* · as the prest it syngeth,
But I can rymes of Robyn Hood · and Randolf erle of Chestre,
Ac neither of owre lorde ne of owre lady · the leste that euere was made.
I haue made vowes fourty · and for-ȝete hem on the morne;
I parfourned neure penaunce · as the prest me hiȝte,
Ne ryȝte sori for my synnes · ȝet was I neuere.
And ȝif I bidde any bedes · but if it be in wrath,
That I telle with my tonge · is two myle fro myne herte.

A. 219. fysch HTU; V *om.* B. 388. to WCO; L *om.*

Schal neuer fysch on Frydai · defyen in my mawe,
Er Abstinence myn aunte · haue i-ȝiue me leue;
And ȝit ichaue i-hated hire · al my lyf-tyme.'

On fastingdais by-fore none · ich fedde me with ale,
Out of reson, a-mong rybaudes · here rybaudrye to huyre.

Her-of, good god · graunte me forȝeuenesse,
Of al my luther lyuyng · in al my lyf-tyme.
For ich a-vowe to verrey god · for honger other for thurste,
Shal neuere fish on Fryday · defye in my wombe,
Tyl Abstinence myn aunte · haue ȝeue me leue,
And ȝut haue ich hated hure · al my lyf-tyme.'

Hic explicit passus septimus.

PASSUS VIII.

Incipit passus octauus.

CONFESSIO ACCIDIE.

THO cam Sleuthe al by-slobered · with two slymed eyen.
'Ich most sitte to be shryuen,' quath he · 'or elles shal ich nappe.
Ich may nouht stonde ne stoupe · ne with-oute stoule knele.
Were ich brouhte in my bed · bote my taylende hit made,
Sholde no ryngynge do me ryse · tyl ich were rype to dyne.'
Benedicite he by-gan with a bolke · and hus brest knokede,
Rascled and remed · and routte at the laste.
'What a-wake, renk,' quath Repentaunce · 'rape the to shryfte!'
'Sholde ich deye,' quath he, 'by this daye · ich drede me sore,
Ich can nouht parfytliche my *pater-noster* · as the prest hit seggeth.
Ich can rymes of Robyn Hode · and of Randolf, erl of Chestre,
Ac of oure lord ne of oure lady · the lest that euere was maked.
Ich haue a-vowed vowes fourty · and for-ȝut hem a morwe;
Ich parfourned neuere penaunce · that the preest me hihte,
Ne ryȝt sory for my synnes · ich sey neuere the tyme.
And ich bidde eny bedis · bote hit be in wratthe,
That ich telle with my tunge · ys ten myle fro my herte.

C. 1. to (*for* two) PM. 2. shryuen E; shryue P. 3. stonnde P. 9. me so sore P.

[*Not in* **A**-*text.*]

I am occupied eche day · haliday and other,
With ydel tales atte ale · and otherwhile in cherches;
Goddes peyne and his passioun · ful selde thynke I there-on.
I visited neuere fieble men · ne fettered folke in puttes;
I haue leuere here an harlotrie · or a somer-game of souteres,
Or lesynges to laughe at · and belye my neighbore,
Than al that euere Marke made · Mathew, Iohn, and Lucas.
And vigilies and fastyng-dayes · alle thise late I passe,
And ligge abedde in lenten · an my lemman in myn armes,
Tyl matynes and masse be do · and thanne go to the freres;
Come I to *ite, missa est* · I holde me yserued.
I nam nou3te shryuen some tyme · but if sekenesse it make,
Nou3t tweies in two 3ere · and thanne vp gesse I schryue me.
I haue be prest and parsoun · passynge thretti wynter,
3ete can I neither solfe ne synge · ne seyntes lyues rede,
But I can fynde in a felde · or in a fourlonge an hare;
Better than in *beatus vir* · or in *beati omnes*
Construe oon clause wel · and kenne it to my parochienes.
I can holde louedayes · and here a reues rekenynge,
Ac in canoun ne in the decretales · I can nou3te rede a lyne.
3if I bigge and borwe it · but 3if it be ytailled,
I for3ete it as 3erne · and 3if men me it axe
Sixe sithes or seuene · I forsake it with othes,
And thus tene I trewe men · ten hundreth tymes.
And my seruauntz some tyme · her salarye is bihynde,
Reuthe is to here the rekenynge · whan we shal rede acomptes;
So with wikked wille and wraththe · my werkmen I paye.
3if any man doth me a benfait · or helpeth me at nede,
I am vnkynde a3ein his curteisye · and can nou3te vnderstonde it;
For I haue and haue hadde · some dele haukes maneres,
I nam nou3te lured with loue · but there ligge au3te vnder the thombe.
The kyndenesse that myne euene-cristene · kidde me fernyere,
Sixty sythes I, Sleuthe · haue for3ete it sith,

B. 434. the WCO; L *om.* 440. fernyere WCR; ferne 3er O; farnere L. 441. fo3ete L. **C.** 21. viseted P. 22. harletrye P. 25. for-3ete MSF;

[*Not in* **A**-*text.*]

Ich am ocupied eche day · haly day and other,
With ydel tales atte nale · and other-whyle in churches;
Godes pyne and hus passion · is pure selde in my thouhte.
Ich visited neuere feble man · ne feterid man in prisone;
Ich hadde leuere huyre of harlotrye · other of a lesyng to lauhen of,
Other lacke men, and lykne hem · in vnlykynge manere,
Than al that euere Marc made · Matheu, Iohan, other Lucas.
Vigilies and fastyngdayes · ich can for-ȝete hem alle.
Ich ligge a bedde in Lente · my lemman in myn armes,
Tyl matyns and messe be don · then haue ich a memorie atte freres.
Ich am nouht shryuen-som tyme · bote syknesse hit make,
Nouht twyes in ten ȝer · ȝut tel ich nauht the haluendele.
Ich haue be prest and person · passyng therty wintere,
ȝut can ich nother solfye ne synge · ne a seyntes lyf rede.
Ac ich can fynde in a felde · and in a forlang an hare,
And holden a knyȝtes court · and a-counte with the reyue;
Ac ich can nouht constrye Catoun · ne clergialliche reden.
Yf ich bygge and borwe ouht · bote hit be y-tayled,
Ich for-ȝete hit as ȝerne · and yf eny man hit asketh,
Sixe sithe other seuene · ich for-sake hit with othes;
Thus haue ich tened trewe men · ten hondred tymes.
And som tyme my seruauns · here salarye is byhynde;
Reuthe ys to huyre the rekenyng · whenne we shulleth rede a-countes,
That with so wicked wil · my werkmen ich paye.
If eny man doth me a byn-fet · other helpeth me at nede,
Ich am vnkynde aȝeyns courtesye · ich can nat vnderstonde hit.
For ich haue and haue had · somdel haukes maneres,
Ich am nat lured with loue · bote ouht lygge vnder thombe.

The kyndenesse that myn emcristene · kydde me fern ȝere,
Syxty sithe ich sleuthe · haue for-ȝute hit sitthe.

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for-ȝute P (*and in* l. 36). 26. lemman MIEF; lemen P. 34. catoun MI; canon PES. 36. P *om.* 1*st* hit. 38. tened MIES; tuned P. 39. salerye P. 42. nede IMFSE; nude P. 43. vnderstonnde P.

Sleuthe for serwe · fel doun i-swowene,
Til *Vigilate* the veil · fette water at his eiȝen,
And flatte on his face · and faste on him criȝede,
And seide, 'war the for wonhope · that wol the bi-traye.
"Icham sori for my sunnes" · sei to thi-seluen,
And bet thi-self on the breste · and bidde god of grace,
For nis no gult her so gret · his merci nis wel more.'
Thenne sat Sleuthe vp · and sikede sore,
And made a-vou bi-fore god · for his foule sleuthe;

In speche and in sparynge of speche · yspilte many a tyme
Bothe flesche and fissche · and many other vitailles;
Bothe bred and ale · butter, melke, and chese
Forsleuthed in my seruyse · til it myȝte serue noman.
I ran aboute in ȝouthe · and ȝaf me nouȝte to lerne,
And euere sith haue be beggere · for my foule sleuthe;
Heu michi, quod sterilem vitam duxi iuuenilem.'
'Repentestow the nauȝte?' quod Repentance · and riȝte with that he swowned,
Til *Vigilate* the veille · fette water at his eyȝen,
And flatte it on his face · and faste on hym criede,
And seide, 'ware the fram wanhope · wolde the bitraye.
"I am sori for my synnes" · sey so to thi-selue,
And bete thi-selue on the breste · and bidde hym of grace;
For is no gult here so grete · that his goodnesse nys more.'
Thanne sat Sleuthe vp · and seyned hym swithe,
And made avowe to-fore god · for his foule sleuthe,
Shal no Sondaye be this seuene ȝere · but sykenesse it lette,
That I ne shal do me er day · to the dere cherche,
And heren matines and masse · as I a monke were.
Shal none ale after mete · holde me thennes,
Tyl I haue euensonge herde · I behote to the rode.
And ȝete wil I ȝelde aȝein · if I so moche haue,
Al that I wikkedly wan · sithen I wytte hadde.
And though my liflode lakke · leten I nelle,
That eche man ne shal haue his · ar I hennes wende:

A. 231. be TU; V *om.* 232. dore (*for* deore) V; dere T. **B.** 447. haue C; haue I WO; L *om.* 448. *quod* R; *quia* LWCO. **C.** 48. many FS; myn P; my E. 50. eche a P. 51. an (*for* and) P. 52. For-

'Schal no Sonenday be this seuen ȝer · (bote seknesse hit make),
That I ne schal do me ar day · to the deore churche,
And here matins and masse · as I a monk were.
Schal non ale after mete · holde me thennes,
Til ichaue euensong herd · I beo-hote to the rode.
And ȝit I-chulle ȝelden aȝeyn · ȝif I so muche haue,
Al that I wikkedliche won · seththe I wit hade.
And thauh my lyflode lakke · letten I nulle
That vche mon schal habben his · er ich henne wende:

In speche and in sparyng of speche · yspilt many tymes
Bothe flesh and eke fish; · and vitaile ich kepte so longe,
Til eche lyf hit lothede · to lokye ther-on, other smylle hit;
Bothe bred and ale · botere, melke, and chese
For-sleuthed in my seruice · and sette hous a fuyre,
And ȝede a-bowte in my ȝouthe · and ȝaf me to no thedom,
And sitthe a beggere haue y-be · for my foule sleuthe;
Heu michi, quod sterilem · duxi uitam iuuenilem!'
'Repente the,' quath Repentaunce · and ryȝt with that he swouned,
Til *Vigilate* the veille · vette water at hus eyen,
And flatte on hus face · and fast on hym criede,
And seide, 'war fro wanhope · that wol the by-traye.
"Ich am sory for my synnes" · seye to thy-selue,
And bet thy-selue on the brest · and bidde god of grace;
For ther is no gilte so gret · that hus goodnesse ne ys more.
Thanne sat Sleuthe vp · and seynede hym ofte,
And made a-vowe by-for god · for hus foule sleuthe,
'Shal no Soneday this seuene ȝer be · bote sycknesse hit make,
That ich ne shal do me or daye · to the dere churche,
And huyre matyns and masse · as ich a monke were.
Shal no ale after mete · holde me thennes,
Til ich haue hurd euesong · ich by-hote to the rode!'

From C. vii. 310–313. (p. 155.)
[He highte 'ȝyuan ȝeld-aȝeyn- · if-ich-so-moche-haue,
Al that ich wickeddelich wan · sytthen ich wit hadde;
And thauh my liflode lacke · leten ich nelle,
That ech man shal haue hus · er ich hennes wende.]

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sleuthe P. P *om.* and. 53. þedam P. 56. and MIF; P *om.* 62. is—gret I; is gult noon so gret SG; nys non so gret synne PE. 64. good (*for* god) P.

And with the residue and the remenaunt · (bi the rode of Chester!)
I schal seche seynt Treuthe · er I seo Rome!'
Robert the robbour · on *Reddite* he lokede,
And for ther nas not wher-with · he wepte ful sore.
But ȝit the sunfol schrewe · seide to him-seluen:
'Crist, that vppon Caluarie · on the cros diȝedest,
Tho Dismas my brother · bi-souȝte the of grace,
And heddest merci of that mon · for *memento* sake,
Thi wille worth vppon me · as ich haue wel deseruet
To haue helle for euere · ȝif that hope neore.

And with the residue and the remenaunt · bi the rode of Chestre!
I shal seke treuthe arst · ar I se Rome!'
Robert the robbere · on *reddite* lokede,
And for ther was nouȝte wher-of · he wepe swithe sore.
Ac ȝet the synful shrewe · seyde to hym-selue,
'Cryst, that on Caluarye · vppon the crosse deydest,
Tho Dismas my brother · bisouȝte ȝow of grace,
And haddest mercy on that man · for *memento* sake,
So rewe on this robberè · that *reddere* ne haue,
Ne neuere wene to wynne · with crafte that I owe.
But for thi mykel mercy · mitigacioun I biseche;
Ne dampne me nouȝte at domesday · for that I did so ille.'
What bifel of this feloun · I can nouȝte faire schewe,
Wel I wote he wepte faste · water with bothe his eyen,
And knowleched his gult · to Cryst ȝete eftsones,
That *penitencia* his pyke · he shulde polsche newe,
And lepe with hym ouer londe · al his lyf-tyme,
For he had leyne bi *Latro* · Luciferes aunte.

From **B.** xiii. 410–416.

[Which ben the braunches · that bryngeth a man to sleuth?
Is whanne a man morneth nouȝte for his mysdedes · ne maketh no sorwe,
Ac penaunce that the prest enioigneth · perfourneth yuel,
Doth none almes-dede · dret hym of no synne,
Lyueth aȝein the bileue · and no lawe holdeth; . . .
And if he auȝte wole here · it is an harlotes tonge.

A. 257. pike he T; pyke U; prest V. newe TU; him newe V.

So rewe on me, Robert · that no red haue,
Ne neuere weene to wynne · for craft that I knowe.
Bote for thi muchel merci · mitigacion I be-seche;
Dampne me not on domes day · for I dude so ille.'
Ak what fel of this feloun · I con not feire schewe,
But wel ich wot he wepte faste · watur with his eiȝen,
And knouhlechede his gult · to Crist ȝit eſt-sones,
That *Penitencia* is pike · he schulde polissche newe,
And lepe with him ouerlond · al his lyf-tyme,
For he hath leiȝen bi *Latro* · Lucifers brother.

From C. vii. 316–330 (p. 157).

[Roberd the ryſeler · on *reddite* lokede,
And for ther was nat wher-with · he wepte ful sore;
And ȝut that synful shrewe · seide to heuene,
'Crist, that on Caluarye · on the croys deidest,
Tho Dismas my brother · by-souhte the of grace,
And haddest mercy on that man · for *memento* sake,
So rewe on me, Roberd · that *reddere* ne haue,
Ne neuere wene to wynne · with craft that ich knowe.
For thy muchel mercy · mytigacion ich by-seche,
Dampne me nouht at domys day · for that ich dude so ille.'
What by-fel of this felon · ich can nouht faire shewe;
Wel ich wot he wepte faste · water with hus eyen,
And to Crist knowlechede · hus coupe ȝut eft-sone,
That penaunce hus pyk-staf · he wolde polische newe,
For he hadde leye by *Latro* · Lucifers aunte.]

Ac whiche be the braunches · that bryngeth men to sleuthe?
Ys, whanne a man mourneth nat · for hus mysdedes;
The penaunce that the prest enioyneth · parfourneth vuele,
Doth non almys-dedes · and drat nat of synne,
Lyueth aȝens the by-leyue · and no lawe kepeth,
And hath no lykynge to lerne · ne of oure lord hure,
Bote harlotrie other horedom · other elles of som wynnyng.

C. 70. men ISMFG; me P.

[*Not in* **A**-*text.*]

Whan men carpeth of Cryst · or of clennesse of soule,
He wexeth wroth and wil nou3t here · but wordes of myrthe.
Penaunce and pore men · and the passioun of seyntes
He hateth to here there-of · and alle that it telleth.
Thise ben the braunches, beth war · that bryngeth a man to wanhope!
3e lordes and ladyes · and legates of holicherche,
That fedeth foles sages · flatereres and lyeres,
And han likynge to lythen hem · to do 3ow to lawghe;
Ve vobis qui ridetis, &c.
And 3iueth hem mete and mede · and pore men refuse,
In 3owre deth-deyinge · I drede me ful sore,
Lest tho thre maner men · to moche sorwe 3ow brynge:
Consentientes et agentes pari pena punientur.
Patriarkes and prophetes · and prechoures of goddes wordes
Sauen thorw her sarmoun · mannes soule fram helle;
Ri3t so flatereres and foles · aren the fendes disciples,
To entice men thorw her tales · to synne and harlotrye.
Ac clerkes that knowen holywryt · shulde kenne lordes,
What Dauid seith of suche men · as the sauter telleth,
Non habitabit in medio domus mee, qui facit superbiam et qui loquitur iniqua:
Shulde none harlote haue audience · in halle ne in chambres,
There wise men were · witnesseth goddes wordes;
Ne no mysproude man · amonges lordes ben allowed.
Clerkes and kni3tes · welcometh kynges ministrales,
And for loue of the lorde · litheth hem at festes;
Muche more, me thenketh · riche men schulde
Haue beggeres byfore hem · the whiche ben goddes ministrales,
As he seyth himself · seynt Iohan bereth witnesse:
Qui vos spernit, me spernit.
Forthi I rede 3ow riche · reueles whan 3e maketh
For to solace 3oure soules · suche ministrales to haue;
The pore, for a fol sage · syttynge at the hey3 table,
And a lered man, to lere the · what oure lorde suffred

From **B**. xiii. 417–445.

C. 79. and I; PMSEF *om.* PISM *om.* 84. lawghe I; lawe P. *quia lugebitis* E; 91. harletrie P. 95. wise men IMSEF; wysmen P. 96.

[*Not in* **A**-*text.*]

Whan men carpen of Cryst · other of clennesse of soule,
He wext wroth, and wol nat huyre · bote wordes of murthe.
Penaunce and poure men · and the passion of seyntes,
He hateth to huyre ther-of · and alle that ther-of carpen.
Thuse beth the braunches, be war · that bryngeth man to wan-hope.
ȝe lordes and ladyes · and legates of holy churche,
That feden fool sages · flaterers and lyers,
And han lykynge to lythen hem · in hope to do ȝow lawghe:
Ve uobis qui ridetis, quia lugebitis, et cetera:
And ȝeueth suche mede and mete · and poure men refusen,
In ȝoure deth-deynge · ich drede me sore
Lest tho manere men · to moche sorwe ȝow brynge;
As god wole; *Consencientes et agentes pari pena punientur.*
Patriarkes and prophetes · prechours of godes wordes
Sauen thorgh here sermons · mannes soule fro helle;
Ryȝt so flaterers and foles · aren the fendes procuratores,
Entysen men thorgh here tales · to synne and to harlotrie.
Clerkus that knowen this · sholde kenne lordes,
What Dauid seide of suche men · as the sauter telleth,
Non habitabit in medio domus mee qui facit superbiam, qui loquitur iniqua.
Sholde non harlot haue audience · in halle ne in chaumbre,
Ther that wise men were; · (witnesse of godes wordes),
Nother a mys-proud man · among lordes be a-lowed.
Clerkus and knyȝtes · welcometh kynges mynstrales,
And for loue of here lordes · lithen hem at festes;
Muche more, me thenketh · riche men auhte
Haue beggers by-fore hem · whiche beth godes mynstrales,
As he seith hym-self · seynt Iohan bereth witnesse,
Qui uos spernit, me eciam spernit.
Ther-for ich rede ȝow riche · reueles when ȝe maken
For to solace ȝoure soules · suche mynstrales to haue;
The poure for a fol sage · syttynge at thy table,
With a lered man, to lere the · what oure lord suffrede

mys-prout P. be MIF; P *om.* 97. wolcomeþ P. 98. PE *om.* And. 104. fol MI; foole E; foul P; *see* l. 83.

[*Not in* **A**-*text*.]

From **B** xiii. 446–457.

For to saue thi soule · fram Sathan thin enemy,
And fithel the, without flaterynge · of gode Friday the storye;
And a blynd man for a bourdeoure · or a bedrede womman,
To crie a largesse by-for oure lorde · ȝoure good loos to ſchewe!
Thise thre maner ministrales · maketh a man to lawhe,
And, in his deth-deyinge · thei don him gret conforte,
That bi his lyue lythed hem · and loued hem to here.
Thise solaseth the soule · til hym-selue be-falle
In a wel gode hope, for he wrouȝte so · amonges worthi ſeyntes.
Ac flatereres and foles · thorw here foule wordes,
Leden tho that louen hem · to Luciferes feste,
With *turpiloquio*, a lay of sorwe · and Luciferes fithele.]

And thanne had Repentance reuthe · and redde hem alle to knele,
'For I shal biseche for al synful · owre saueoure of grace,
To amende vs of owre mysdedes · and do mercy to vs alle.
Now god,' quod he, 'that of thi goodnesse · gonne the worlde make,
And of nauȝte madest auȝte · and man moste liche to thi-selue,
And sithen suffredest for to synne · a sikenesse to vs alle,
And al for the best, as I bileue · what euere the boke telleth,
O felix culpa! o necessarium peccatum Ade! &c.
For thourgh that synne thi sone · sent was to this erthe,
And bicam man of a mayde · mankynde to saue,
And madest thi-self with thi sone · and vs synful yliche,
Faciamus hominem ad ymaginem et similitudinem nostram;
Et alibi: qui manet in caritate, in deo manet, et deus in eo;
And sith with thi self sone · in owre sute deydest
On godefryday for mannes sake · at ful tyme of the daye,
There thi-self ne thi sone · no sorwe in deth feledest;
But in owre secte was the sorwe · and thi sone it ladde,
Captiuam duxit captiuitatem.
The sonne for sorwe ther-of · les syȝte for a tyme

[*Not in* A-*Text.*]

For to sauy thy saule · fram Satan thyn enemye,
And fithele the, with-oute flateryng · of goode Fryday the geste,
And a blynde man for a bordiour · other a bedreden womman
To crye a largesse by-fore oure lorde · 3oure goode loos to shewe. 109
Thuse thre manere mynstrales · maken a man to lauhe;
In hus deth-deynge · thei don hym gret comfort,
That by hus lyue litheth hem · and loueth hem to huyre. 112
Thuse solaceth the soule · til hym-self be-falle
In a wel good hope, for he wroghte so · a-mong worthy seyntes;
Ther flaterers and foles · with here foule wordes
Leden tho that lithen hem · to Luciferes feste, 116
With *turpiloquio*, a lay of sorwe · and Lucifers fithele,
To perpetuel peyne · other purgatorye as wykke;
For he litheth and loueth · that godes lawe despiceth;
Qui histrionibus dat, demonibus sacrificat.
Tho was Repentaunce redy · and radde hem alle to knele,
'Ich shal by-seche for alle synfulle · oure sauyour of grace, 121
To a-menden ous of oure mysdedes · do mercy to ous alle.
God, of thy goodnesse · thow gonne the worlde make,
And of nouht madest ouht · and man lyke thi-selue, 124
Sitthe soffredest hym do synne · a syknesse to ous alle,
And for oure best, as ich by-leyue · what-euere the book telle;
O felix culpa, o necessarium peccatum Ade!
For thorw that synne thy sone · sent was tyl erthe,
And by-cam man of a mayde · mankynde to a-mende, 128
And madest thi-selue with thy sone · oure soule and body lyche;
Ego in patre, et pater in me est; et qui uidet me, patrem meum uidet.
And sitthe in oure secte · as hit semed, thow deydest,
On a Fryday, in forme of man · feledest oure sorwe;
Captiuam duxit captiuitatem.
The sonne for sorwe ther-of · lees lyght for a tyme, 132

C. 107. fiþele EF; fitayle P. geste F; feste PJEM; beste S. 112. *Read* litheþ (*see* B-text); loueþ PEMS; leued I; leeueth F; *cf.* l. 119. 117. fitele P. 124. þe (*for* þi) P; see l. 60. 127. PE *om.* þat. 128. a IMF; PSE *om.* 129. þe (*for* þi) P. P om. *in* before *patre*. 130. secke P; *see* l. 137.

A thousent of men tho · throngen to-geders,
Weopyng and weylyng · for heore wikkede dedes,

Aboute mydday whan most li3te is · and mele tyme of seintes;

Feddest with thi fresche blode · owre forfadres in derknesse,
Populus qui ambulabat in tenebris, vidit lucem magnam;
And thorw the li3te that lepe oute of the · Lucifer was blent,
And blewe alle thi blissed · in-to the blisse of paradise.

The thrydde daye after · thow 3edest in owre sute,
A synful Marie the seighe · ar seynte Marie thi dame,
And al to solace synful · thow suffredest it so were;
Non veni vocare iustos, set peccatores ad penitenciam.
And al that Marke hath ymade · Mathew, Iohan, and Lucas,
Of thyne dou3tiest dedes · were don in owre armes;
Verbum caro factum est, et habitauit in nobis.
And bi so moche, me semeth · the sikerere we mowe
Bydde and biseche · if it be thi wille,
That art owre fader and owre brother · be merciable to vs,

And haue reuthe on thise ribaudes · that repente hem here sore,
That euere thei wratthed the in this worlde · in worde, thou3te,
or dedes.'
Thanne hent Hope an horne · of *deus, tu conuersus viuificabis nos,*
And blew it with *beati quorum · remisse sunt iniquitates,*
That alle seyntes in heuene · songen at ones,
Homines et iumenta saluabis, quemadmodum multiplicasti misericordiam tuam, deus, etc.
A thousand of men tho · thrungen togyderes;
Criede vpward to Cryst · and to his clene moder
To haue grace to go with hem · Treuthe to seke.

B. 514. *nos* R; L *om.*

Cri3inge vpward to Crist · and to his clene moder
To haue grace to seche seint Treuthe · god leue thei so mote!

A-bowte midday whanne most lyght ys · and meeltyme of seyntes;
Feddest tho with thi fresshe blod · oure for-fadres in helle,
Populus qui ambulabat in tenebris, lucem magnam uidit.
The lyght that lemed out of the · Lucifer hit blente,
And broughte thyne blessede fro thennes · in-to the blysse of heuene.
The thridde day ther-after · thow 3edest in oure secte;
A synful Marye the seyh · er seynt Marie thy moder,
And al to solace synful · thow soffredest hit so were;
Non ueni uocare iustos, sed peccatores ad penitenciam.
And al that Marc hath ymad · Matheu, Iohan, and Lucas,
Of thyne douhtieste dedes · was don in oure secte;
Uerbum caro factum est.
And by so moche hit semeth · the sykerloker we mowe
Bydde and by-seche the · yf hit be thy wil,
That art ferst oure fader · and of flessh oure brother,
And sitthen oure saueour · and seidest with thy tonge,
That what tyme we synful men · wolden be sory
For dedes that we han don ille · dampned sholde we be neuere,
Yff we knewelechid and cryde · Crist ther-of mercy;
Quandocumque ingemuerit peccator, omnes iniquitates eius non recordabor amplius.
And for that mochel mercy · and Marie loue thy moder,
Haue reuthe of alle thuse rybaudes · that repenten hem sore,
That euere thei gulte a3ens the, god · in gost other in dede.'
Thenne hente Hope an horn · of *deus, tu conuersus uiuificabis nos,*
And blew hit with *beati quorum · remisse sunt iniquitates, et cetera,*
That alle seyntes with synful men · songen with Dauid,
Homines et iumenta saluabis, domine, quemadmodum multiplicasti misericordiam tuam, deus!
A thousend of men tho · throngen to-gederes,
Cryyng vpward to Crist · and to hus clene moder,
To haue grace to go to Treuthe · god leyue that thei mote!

C. 133. P *om.* most. 141. in IMSFG; on PE; *see* l. 137. 144. ert (*for* art) PE.

PASSUS VI.

Passus Sextus de visione, vt prius.

NOW riden this folk · and walken on fote
To seche that seint · in selcouthe londis.
Bote ther were fewe men so wys · that couthe the wei thider,
Bote bustelyng forth as bestes · ouer valeyes and hulles,
For while thei wente here owen wille · thei wente alle amys.
Til hit was late and longe · that thei a leod metten,
Apparayled as a palmere · in pilgrimes wedes.
He bar a bordun i-bounde · with a brod lyste,
In a wethe-bondes wyse · i-writhen aboute.
A bagge and a bolle · he bar bi his syde;

Ac there was wy3te non so wys · the wey thider couthe,
But blustreden forth as bestes · ouer bankes and hilles,
Til late was and longe · that thei a lede mette,
Apparailled as a paynym · in pylgrymes wyse.
He bare a burdoun ybounde · with a brode liste,
In a withewyndes wise · ywounden aboute.
A bolle and a bagge · he bare by his syde;
An hundreth of ampulles · on his hatt seten,
Signes of Synay · and shelles of Galice;
And many a cruche on his cloke · and keyes of Rome,
And the vernicle bifore · for men shulde knowe,
And se bi his signes · whom he sou3te hadde.
This folke frayned hym firste · fro whennes he come?
'Fram Synay,' he seyde · 'and fram owre lordes sepulcre;
In Bethleem and in Babiloyne · I haue ben in bothe,
In Ermonye, in Alisaundre · in many other places.
3e may se bi my signes · that sitten on myn hatte,
That I haue walked ful wyde · in wete and in drye,
And sou3te gode seyntes · for my soules helth.'
'Knowestow ou3te a corseint · that men calle Treuthe?

Coudestow au3te wissen vs the weye · where that wy dwelleth?'

A. 1, 2, 5. *These lines are in* H *only.* 6. hit H; V *om.*

An hundred of ampolles · on his hat seeten,
Signes of Synay . and schelles of Galys;
Moni cros on his cloke · and keiȝes of Rome,
And the vernicle bi-fore · for men schulde him knowe,
And seo be his signes · whom he souht hedde.
This folk fraynede him feire · from whenne that he coome?
'From Synay,' he seide, · 'and from the sepulcre;
From Bethleem and Babiloyne · I haue ben in bothe,
In Ynde and in Assye · and in mony other places.
ȝe mouwe seo be my signes · that sitteth on myn hat,
That I haue walked ful wyde · in weete and in druye,
And souht goode seyntes · for my soule hele.'
'Knowest thou ouht a corseynt · men calleth seynt Treuthe?
Const thou wissen vs the wey · wher that he dwelleth?'

Ac ther was weye non so wys · that the way thider couthe,
Bote blostrede forth as bestes · ouer baches and hulles,
Til late was and longe · that thei a lede mette,
A-paraild as a paynym · in pylgrymes wise.
He bar a bordon ybounde · with a brod lyste,
In a weythwynde wyse · ywrythe al aboute;
A bolle and a bagge · he bar by hus syde,
And an hondred hanypeles · on hus hatte seten,
Signes of Syse · and shilles of Galys,
And meny crouche on hus cloke · and keyes of Rome,
And the fernycle by-fore · for men sholde knowe,
And se by hus sygnes · wham he souht hadde.
Thys folke frayned hym furst · fro whennes he come?
'Fro Sinay,' he sayde · 'and fro the sepulcre.
In Bethleem, in Babilonie · ich haue ybe bothe,
In Ermanie, in Alisaundre · and in Damascle,
ȝe may see by my synges · that sitten on my cappe,
Ich haue ysouht goode seyntes · for my soules helthe,
And walked ful wide · in wete and in drye.'
'Knowst thow ouȝt a cor-seynt,' quath ich · 'that men clepeth Treuthe?
Couthest thow wissen ous the way · whoder out treuthe wonyeth?'

C. 169. And se IFS; As PE; *see* l. 174. 177. ouȝt GS; auȝt F; oght I; PE *om.* core-seynt P.

'Nay, so god glade me!' · seide the gome thenne,
'Sauh I neuere palmere · with pyk ne with schrippe
Such a seint seche · bote now in this place.'
'Peter!' quod a plouȝ-mon · and putte forth his hed,
'I knowe him as kuyndeliche · as clerk doth his bokes;
Clene concience and wit · kende me to his place,
And dude enseure me seththe · to serue him for euere.
Bothe to sowen and to setten · while I swynke mihte,
I haue ben his felawe · this fiftene wynter;
Bothe i-sowed his seed · and suwed his beestes,
And eke i-kept his corn · i-caried hit to house,

'Nay, so me god helpe!' · seide the gome thanne,
'I seygh neuere palmere · with pike ne with scrippe
Axen after hym er · til now in this place.'

'Peter!' quod a plowman · and put forth his hed,
'I knowe hym as kyndely · as clerke doth his bokes;
Conscience and Kynde Witte · kenned me to his place,
And deden me suren hym sikerly · to serue hym for euere,
Bothe to sowe and to sette · the while I swynke myghte.
I haue ben his folwar · al this fifty wyntre;
Bothe ysowen his sede · and sued his bestes,
With-inne and with-outen · wayted his profyt.
I dyke and I delue · I do that treuthe hoteth;
Some tyme I sowe · and some tyme I thresche,
In tailoures crafte and tynkares crafte · what Treuthe can deuyse,
I weue an I wynde · and do what Treuthe hoteth.
For thouȝe I seye it my-self · I serue hym to paye.
Ich haue myn huire of hym wel · and otherwhiles more;
He is the prestest payer · that pore men knoweth;
He ne with-halt non hewe his hyre · that he ne hath it at euen.
He is as low as a lombe · and loueliche of speche,
And ȝif ȝe wilneth to wite · where that he dwelleth,
I shal wisse ȝow witterly · the weye to his place.'
'ȝe, leue Pieres,' quod this pilgrymes · and profered hym huire
For to wende with hem · to Treuthes dwellyng-place.

A. 30. kende TU; tauȝte VH. B. 549. fifty WCO; fourty LR.

I-dyket and i-doluen · i-don what he hihte,
With-innen and withouten · i-wayted his profyt;
Ther nis no laborer in this leod · that he loueth more,
For thauh I sigge hit my-self · I serue him to paye.
I haue myn hure of him wel · and otherwhile more;
He is the presteste payere · that pore men habbeth;
He with-halt non hyne his huire · that he hit nath at euen.
He is as louh as a lomb · louelich of speche,
And ȝif ȝe wolleth i-wite · wher that he dwelleth,
I wol wissen ow the wey · hom to his place.'
'Ye, leue Pers,' quod this palmers · and profreden him huire.

'Nay, so god me helpe' · seyde the gome thenne,
'Ich seyh neuere palmere · with pyk ne with scrippe
Asken after hym, er now · in thys ilke place.'

HIC PRIMO COMPARET PETRUS PLOUGHMAN.

'Peter!' quath a ploughman · and putte forth hus hefd,
'Ich knowe hym as kyndeliche · as clerkus don hure bokes.
Conscience and Kyndewit · kende me to hus place,
And maked me sykeren hym sitthen · to seruen hym for euere,
Bothe to sowe and to setten · the whyle ich swynke myghte,
With-ynne and with-oute · to wayten hus profyt.
Ich haue yben his folwer · al thes fourty wynter,
And serued Treuthe sothlyche · somdel to paye;
In alle kynne craftes · that he couthe deuyse
Profitable to the plouh · he putte me to lerne;
And thauh ich seye hit my-self · ich seruede hym to paye.
Ich haue myn hyre of hym wel · and other whyle more;
He ys the most prest paiere · that eny poure man knoweth.
He with-halt non hewe · hus hyre ouere euen;
He ys louh as a lombe · and leel of hus tonge,
And ho so wilneth to wyte · wher that Treuthe wonyeth,
Ich wol wissen ȝow wel · ryght to hus place.'
'ȝe, leue Peers,' quath tho pylgrymes · and profrede Peers mede.

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557. of hym R; L *om.* C. 180. shrippe P. 183. Iich (*for* Ich) P.
185. seren (*for* seruen) P. 191. Prophitable P. 194. PE *om.* the.
195. hewe I; hywe P; hyne EMSFG.

'Nai, bi the peril of my soule,' quod Pers · and bigon to swere,
'I nolde fonge a ferthing · for seynt Thomas schrine! 48
Treuthe wolde loue me the lasse · a gret while after!
Bote ȝe that wendeth to him · this is the wei thider:
ȝe mote go thorw Mekenesse · bothe mon and wyf,
Til ȝe come in-to Concience · that Crist knowe the sothe 52
That ȝe loueth him leuere · then the lyf in oure hertes,
And thenne oure neihebors next · in none wyse apeire
Otherweys then thou woldest · men wrouȝten to thi-seluen.

'Nay, bi my soules helth,' quod Pieres · and gan forto swere,
'I nolde fange a ferthynge · for seynt Thomas shryne!
Treuthe wolde loue me the lasse · a longe tyme thereafter!

Ac if ȝe wilneth to wende wel · this is the weye thider, 568
That I shal say to yow · and sette yow in the sothe.
ȝe mote go thourgh Mekenesse · bothe men and wyues,
Tyl ȝe come in-to Conscience · that Cryst wite the sothe,
That ȝe louen owre lorde god · leuest of alle thinges, 572

And thanne ȝowre neighbores nexte · in non wise apeyre
Otherwyse than thow woldest · he wrouȝte to thi-selue.
And so boweth forth bi a broke · Beth-buxum-of-speche,
Tyl ȝe fynden a forth · ȝowre-fadres-honoureth, 576
Honora patrem et matrem, etc.
Wadeth in that water · and waschеth ȝow wel there,
And ȝe shul lepe the liȝtloker · al ȝowre lyf-tyme.
And so shaltow se Swere-nouȝte- · but-if-it-be-for-nede-
And-namelich-an-ydel- · the-name-of-god-almyȝti. 580
Thanne shaltow come by a crofte · but come thow nouȝte there-inne;
That crofte hat Coueyte-nouȝte- · mennes-catel-ne-her-wyues-
Ne-none-of-her-serauntes- · that-noyen-hem-myȝte;

A. 57. *From* UTD; V *omits this line.* **B.** 569. *From* CO; LWR *omit this line.* **C.** 200. pereil P. 212. And oþer-wyse PE; *but* IMFS *omit* And. 213. brok M; brook SF; bok P. 214. honouriеþ P. 215.

So bouweth forth bi a brok · Beo-boxum-of-speche,
Forth til ȝe fynde a forde · ȝour-fadres-honoureth;
Wadeth in that water · wasscheth ow wel there,
And ȝe schul lepe the lihtloker · al oure lyf-tyme.
Sone schaltou thenne i-seo · Swere-not-but-thou-haue-neode-
And-nomeliche-in-idel- · the-nome-of-god-almihti.
Thenne schul ȝe come bi a croft · but cum ȝe not ther-inne;
The croft hette Coueyte-not- · mennes-catel-ne-heore-wyues-
Ne-non-of-heore-seruauns- · that-nuyȝen-hem-mihte;

'Nay, by the peril of my soule' · Peers gan swere,
'Ich nolde fonge a ferthing · for seynt Thomas shryne!
Were it told to Treuthe · that ich toke mede,
He wolde louye me the lasse · a longe tyme after.

ALTA UIA AD FIDELITATEM EST OBSERUATIO .X. PRECEPTORUM, UT DICIT PETRUS PLOUHMAN.

Ac who so wol wende · ther as Treuthe dwelleth,
This ys the heye weye thyderwarde · wyteth wel the sothe.
ȝe most gon thorwe Meknesse · alle men and wommen,
Tyl ȝe come to Conscience · knowen of god selue,
That ȝe loue hym as lord · leelliche a-bouen alle;
That ys to seye sothliche · ȝe sholde rather deye
Than eny dedliche synne do · for drede ȝther for preyere.
And thenne ȝoure neghebores next · in none wyse apeyre,
Other-wyse than ȝe wolde · thei wroughte ȝou alle tymes.
And so goth forth by the brok · a brygge as hit were,
Tyl ȝe fynde a forde · ȝoure-fadres-honoureth;
Wadeth wel in that water · and wascheth ȝow wel there,
And ȝe shulle lepe the lyghtloker · al ȝoure lyf-tyme;

Honora patrem et matrem, et eris longeuus super terram.

Thanne shalt thow see Swery-nat- · bot-yt-be-for-nede-
Nameliche-an-ydel- · the-name-of-god-al-myghty.
Thanne shalt thow come by a croft · ac com thou nat ther-ynne,
The croft hatte Coueyte-nat- · mennes-catel-ne-here-wyues-
Ne-non-of-here-seruans- · that-nuyen-hem-myghte;

þe (*for* þat) P. wasche PE. 217. see I; go by F; PEMS *omit.* nude (*for* nede) P. 219. PS *om.* thou.

Loke thou breke no bouȝ there · but ȝif hit beo thin owne.
Twei stokkes ther stondeth · but stunt thou not there,
Thei hetten, Sle-not, Ne-stel-not · stryk forth bi hem bothe;
Lef hem on thi luft half · loke hem not aftur,
And hold wel thin haly-day · euere til euen.
Thenne schaltou blenchen at a brok · Ber-no-fals-witnesse,
He is frettet with-innen with floreyns · and othes wel monye;
Loke thou plokke no plonte ther · for peril of thi soule.
Thenne schaltou se Sei-soth- · so-hit-beo-to-done-
And-loke-that-thou-lyȝe-not- · for-no-monnes-bidyng.
Thenne schaltou come to a court · cleer as the sonne,
The mot is of Merci · the maner al abouten,

Loke ȝe breke no bowes there · but if it be ȝowre owne.
Two stokkes there stondeth · ac stynte ȝe nouȝte there,
They hatte Stele-nouȝte, Ne-slee-nouȝte · stryke forth by bothe;
And leue hem on thi left halfe · and loke nouȝte there-after;
And holde wel thyne haliday · heighe til euen.
Thanne shaltow blenche at a berghe · Bere-no-false-witnesse,
He is frithed in with floreines · and other fees many;
Loke thow plukke no plante there · for peril of thi soule.
Thanne shal ȝe se Sey-soth- · so-it-be-to-done-
In-no-manere-ellis-nauȝte- · for-no-mannes-biddynge.
Thanne shaltow come to a courte · as clere as the sonne,
The mote is of Mercy · the manere aboute,
And alle the wallis ben of Witte · to holden Wille oute;
And kerneled with Crystendome · man-kynde to saue,
Boterased with Bileue-so- · or-thow-beest-nouȝte-ysaued.
And alle the houses ben hiled · halles and chambres,
With no lede, but with Loue · and Lowe-speche-as-bretheren.
The brugge is of Bidde-wel- · the-bette-may-thow-spede;
Eche piler is of Penaunce · of preyeres to seyntes,
Of Almes-dedes ar the hokes · that the gates hangen on.
Grace hatte the gateward · a gode man for sothe,
Hys man hatte Amende-ȝow · for many man him knoweth;
Telleth hym this tokene · that Treuthe wite the sothe;

A. 73. se UD; V *om.* **B.** 586. hatte CR; hatten O; hat L. 590. fees WCR; foes L. 600. Wit L. **C.** 222. ȝif SM; if IG; PEF *om.* owne MSF; owe PE. 223. stynt ESF; stunt P. 228. friþed MIG;

And alle the walles beth of Wit · to holde Wil theroute;
The carnels beth of Cristendam · the kuynde to saue,
Brutaget with the Bileeue · wher-thorw we moten beo sauet.
Alle the houses beoth i-hulet · halles and chaumbres,
With no led, bote with Loue- · as-Bretheren-of-o-wombe.
The tour ther Treuthe is inne · i-set is aboue the sonne,
He may do with the day-sterre · what him deore lyketh;
Deth dar not do · thing that he defendeth.
Grace hette the ȝate-ward · a good mon forsothe,
His mon hette A-mende-thou · for mony men him knoweth;
Tel him this tokene · for Treuthe wot the sothe:

Loke thou bere nat there aweye · bote ȝif yt be thyn owne.
Two stockes ther stonden · ac stynt thow nouht there;
Thei hatte Stel-net and Slee-nat · stryk forth by hem bothe,
And leue hem in thy lift hand · and loke nouht therafter,
And hold wel thyn halyday · heye tyl euen.
Thenne shalt thou blenche at a bergh · Ber-no-fals-wytnesse,
He ys frithed yn with floreynes · and other fees menye,
Loke thow plocke ther no plaunte · for peryl of thy soule.
Thanne shalt thow see Seye-sothe- · so-hit-be-to-done-
In-no-manere-elles-nat- · for-no-mannes-preyere.
So shalt thow come to a court · as cleer so the sonne,
The mot ys of Mercy · in myddes the manere,
Al the wallynge ys of Wit · for Wil ne sholde hit wynne.
The kernels beth of Crystendome · that kynde to saue,
And boteraced with By-leyue-so- · other-thow-best-nat-saued.
Alle the houses beth heled · halles and chambres,
With no lede, bote with Loue · and with Leel-speche.
The barres aren of Buxumnesse · as bretheren of on wombe.
The brigge hatte Bid-wel- · the-bet-myght-thow-spede;
Eche pyler ys of Penaunce · and preyers to seyntes,
The hokes aren Almys-dedes · that the ȝates hongen on.
Grace hatte the gate-warde · a good man for sothe,
Hus man hatte Amende-ȝow · meny man hym knoweth.
Tel hym thys ilke tokne · 'Treuthe wot the sothe,

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freþed P. 230. see I; go by F; PEMS *om.* 236. best IM; beest G; worsthest (*sic*) P; worst ES. 239. breþeren IEF; breþres P. 240. bregge (*for* brigge) P. 242. dedes IMEF; dede PS.

'I performede the penaunce · that the prest me en-ioynede;
I am sori for my sunnes · and so schal I euere
Whon I thenke ther-on · thauȝ I weore a pope.'
Bidde A-mende-thou meken him · to his mayster ones,
To wynne vp the wiket-ȝat · that the wey schutte,
Tho that Adam and Eue · eeten heore bone;
For he hath the keye of the cliket · thauȝ the kyng slepe.
And ȝif Grace the graunte · to gon in in this wyse,
Thou schalt seo Treuthe him-self · sitten in thin herte.

'I parfourned the penaunce · the preest me enioyned,
And am ful sori for my synnes · and so I shal euere,
Whan I thinke there-on · theighe I were a pope.'
Biddeth Amende-ȝow meke him · til his maistre ones,
To wayue vp the wiket · that the womman shette,
Tho Adam and Eue · eten apples vnrosted;
Per Euam cunctis clausa est, et per Mariam virginem iterum patefacta est;
For he hath the keye and the cliket · thouȝ the kyng slepe.
And if Grace graunte the · to go in in this wise,
Thow shalt see in thi-selue · Treuthe sitte in thine herte,
In a cheyne of charyte · as thow a childe were,
To suffre hym and segge nouȝte · aȝein thi sires wille.

Ac bewar thanne of Wrath-the · that is a wikked shrewe,
He hath enuye to hym · that in thine herte sitteth;
And pukketh forth pruyde · to prayse thi-seluen.
The boldnesse of thi bienfetes · maketh the blynde thanne,
And thanne worstow dryuen oute as dew · and the dore closed,
Kayed and cliketed · to kepe the with-outen;
Happily an hundreth wyntre · ar thow eft entre.
Thus myght thow lesen his loue · to late wel by thi-selue,

A. 91. Amende-thou; A-mende V; *but see* l. 86. 98. that wykkide TUD; for he is a V. 99. in—sitteth TUD; sitteth in thyn herte V. 103. kepe TD; holden V. **B.** 611. wayne *or* wayue. 612. *iterum*; in R only. 613. clikat L. 623. clikated L. **C.** 248. mekeþ M; meek PS. 249. ȝates

Thenne loke that thou loue him wel · and his lawe holde;
Bote beo wel i-war of Wraththe · that wykkide schrewe,
For he hath envye to him · that in thyn herte sitteth;
And puiteth forth pruide · to preisen thi-seluen.
The boldnesse of thi benfes · blendeth thin eiȝen,
And so worthestou i-driuen out · and the dore i-closet,
I-keiȝet and i-kliketed · to kepe the ther-oute;
Hapliche, an hundred ȝer · er thou eft entre.
Thus maihtou leosen his loue · to leten wel bi thi-seluen,

Ich am sory for my synnes · and so shal ich euere,
And parfourne the penaunce · that the preest me highte.'
Rydeth to A-mende-ȝow · meketh ȝow to hus mayster Grace,
To openen and vndo · the hye ȝate of heuene,
That Adam and Eue · aȝens ous alle shutte:
Per Euam ianua celi cunctis clausa est, et per Mariam uirginem iterum patefacta est.
A ful leel lady · vn-leek hure of grace;
Hue hath a keye and a clyket · thauh the kynge slepe,
And may lede yn wham hue loueth · as here luf lyketh.
And yf Grace graunte the · to go yn in thys wise,
Thow shalt se Treuthe sytte · in thy selue herte,
And solace thy soule · and saue the fro pyne.
Al-so charge Charyte · a churche to make
In thyn hole herte · to herberghwen alle treuthe,
And fynde alle manere folke · fode to hure saules,
Yf loue and leaute · and owre lawe be trewe:
Quodcumque petieritis in nomine meo, dabitur enim uobis.
Be war thenne of Wratthe · that wickede shrewe,
For he hath enuye to hym · that in thyn herte sytteth,
And poketh forth pruyde · to preysy thi-selue.
The boldnesse of thy bynfet · maketh the blynde thenne,
So worst thow dryuen out as deuh · and the dore closed,
Y-keyed and yclyketed · to close the with-oute,
Hapliche an hondred wynter · ar thow eft entrie.
Thus myght thou lese hus loue · to lete wel by thi-selue,

PEMS; *but* gate IF; *see* l. 251. 251. leel EMSFG; bel P. vn-leek IS; vnlek G; vn-lyke P; vnlocket M. 252. clykett P. 259. fode EMS; foude P. 260. trywe P. 265. worst SM; worth PEIG. 266. yclykeded P. 268. þe (*for* thi) PS.

Bote gete hit aȝeyn bi grace · and bi no ȝift elles.
Ak ther beoth seuen sustren · that seruen Treuthe euere,
And ben porters at posternes · that to the place longen.
That on hette Abstinence · and Humilitie a-nother,
Charite and Chastite · beoth tweyne ful choyse maidenes,
Pacience and Pees · muche peple helpen,
Largesse the ladi · ledeth in ful monye.
Bote hose is sib to this sustren · so me god helpe!
Is wonderliche wel-comen · and feire vnderfonge.
And bote ȝe ben sibbe · to summe of theos seuene,

And neuere happiliche efte entre · but grace thow haue.
Ac there aren seuene sustren · that seruen Treuthe euere,
And aren porteres of the posternes · that to the place longeth.
That one hat Abstenence · and Humilite an other,
Charite and Chastite · ben his chief maydenes,
Pacience and Pees · moche poeple thei helpeth,
Largenesse the lady · heo let in ful manye;
Heo hath hulpe a thousande oute · of the deueles ponfolde.
And who is sibbe to this seuene · so me god helpe!
He is wonderliche welcome · and faire vnderfongen.
And but-if ȝe be syb · to summe of thise seuene,
It is ful harde bi myne heued,' quod Peres · 'for any of ȝow alle
To geten ingonge at any gate there · but grace be the more.'
'Now, bi Cryst,' quod a cutpurs · 'I haue no kynne there!'
'Ne I,' quod an apewarde · 'bi auȝte that I knowe!'
'Wite god,' quod a wafrestre · 'wist I this for sothe,
Shulde I neuere ferthere a fote · for no freres prechynge.'
'ȝus,' quod Pieres the plowman · and pukked hem alle to gode,
'Mercy is a maydene there · hath myȝte ouer hem alle;
And she is syb to alle synful · and her sone also;
And thoruȝe the helpe of hem two · (hope thow none other),
Thow myȝte gete grace there · bi so thow go bityme.'

A. 126. go TUD; come V. B. 627. aren R; ar L; *see* l. 628. C. 269. hit MSG; it I; PE *om.* gifte EI; gift M; gefte S; gyse P. 278–280. so me—seuene *from* SIMEG; P *omits*. 282. engang P. 287.

Hit is ful hard, bi myn hed! · eny of ow alle
To gete in-goynge at that ȝat · bote grace beo the more.'
'Bi Crist,' quath a cutte-pors · 'I haue no kun there!'
'No,' quath an apeward · 'for nout that I knowe!'
'I-wis,' quath a waferer · 'wust I this for sothe,
Schulde I neuere forthere a fote · for no freres prechinge.'
'ȝus,' quath Pers the plouȝ-mon · and prechede hire to goode,
'Merci is a mayden ther · and hath miht ouer hem alle;
Heo is sib to alle synful men · an hire sone alse;
And thorw the help of hem two · (hope thou non other),
Thou maiȝt gete grace ther · so that thou go bi-tyme.'

And geten hit a-geyn thorw grace · ac thorgh no gifte elles.
Ther ben seuene sustres · that seruen Treuthe euere,
And aren porters at posternes · that to the place longen;
That on hatte Abstinence · and Humilite another,
Charite and Chastite · ben hus chef maydenes,
Pacience and Pees · muche puple helpen,
Largenesse that lady · lat yn ful menye;
Non of hem alle · helpe may yn betere,
For hue paieth for prisons · in places and in peynes.
And ho is sybbe to thuse seuene · so me god helpe!
He is wondirlich welcome · and fayre vndirfonge.
Ho is not sib to these seuene · sothly to telle,
Hit is ful hard, by myn heued · eny of ȝou alle
To geten ingang at eny gate · bote grace be the more.'
'By Cryst,' quath a kitte-pors · 'ich haue no kyn there.'
'Ne ich,' quath an apewarde · 'by ouht that ich knowe!'
'Wyte god,' quath a wafrestre · 'wist ich the sothe,
Ich wolde no forther a fot · for no freres prechinge.'
'ȝus,' quath Peers plouhman · and pokede hem alle to goode;
'Mercy is a mayde there · hath myght ouer hem alle;
And hue is sybbe to alle synful · and hure sone bothe.
And thorwe the help of hem two · hope thow non other,
Thow myght gete grace ther · so thow go by tyme.'

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pokede EMSG; pukede P. 288. a EMIG; PS *om.* 290. two E; tuo I; to PMS.

PASSUS VII.

Passus septimus de visione, vt prius.

'THIS weore a wikked wei · bote hose hedde a gyde,
That mihte folwen us vch a fote · forte that we come there.'

'By seynt Poule,' quod a pardonere · 'perauenture I be nouȝte knowe there,
I wil go fecche my box with my breuettes · and a bulle with bisshopes lettres!'
'By Cryst,' quod a comune womman · 'thi companye wil I folwe,
Thow shalt sey I am thi sustre · I ne wot where thei bicome.'

PASSUS VI.

Passus Sextus.

'THIS were a wikked way · but who-so hadde a gyde
That wolde folwen us eche a fote;' · thus this folke hem mened.

Quath Perkyn the plouman · 'bi seynt Peter of Rome,
I haue an half-acre to erye · bi the heighe way;
Hadde I eried this half-acre · and sowen it after,
I wolde wende with ȝow · and the way teche.'
'This were a longe lettynge' · quod a lady in a sklayre,
'What sholde we wommen · worche there-whiles?'

B. 3. Quatȝ L. 6. wolde WO; wil LR. **C.** 294. nude (*for* nede) P. 296. greiþliche M; graithliche I; grettliche PESG. 301. syghit (*for* syghte) P.

Quath Perkyn the plouȝmon · 'bi Peter the apostel,
I haue an half aker to herie · bi the heiȝe weye;
Weore he wel i-eried · thenne with ou wolde I wende,
And wissen ou the rihte weye · til ȝe founden Treuthe.'
'That weore a long lettynge' · quath a ladi in a skleir,
'What schul we wimmen · worche the while?'

'ȝe, *villam emi*,' quath on · 'and now most ich thudere, 292
To loke how me lyketh hit' · and tok hus leue at Peers.
Another a-non ryght · nede seyde he hadde
To folwen fif ȝokes · 'for-thy me by-houeth
To gon with a good wil · and greithliche hem dryue; 296
For-thy ich praye ȝow, Peers · paraunter, yf ȝe meteth
Treuthe, telleth to hym · that ich be excused.'
Thenne was ther on heihte Actif · an hosebounde he semed;
'Ich haue ywedded a wyf,' quath he · 'wel wantowen of maners;
Were ich seuenyght fro hure syghte · synnen hue wolde, 301
And loure on me and lyghtliche chide · and seye ich loue anothere.
For-thy, Peers plouhman · ich praye the telle hit Treuthe,
Ich may nat come for a Kytte · so hue cleueth on me;
Vxorem duxi, et ideo non possum uenire.'
Quath Contemplacion, 'by Crist · thauh ich care suffre,
Famyn and defaute · folwen ich wolle Peers; 306
Ac the wey ys so wyckede · bote ho so hadde a gyde
That myght folwen ous ech fot · for drede of mys-tornynge.'
Hic explicit passus octauus.

PASSUS IX.

Incipit passus Nonus.

THO seyde Perken plouhman · 'by seynt Peter of Rome,
Ich haue an half-acre to eren · by the hye weye.
Hadde ich ered that half-acre · and sowen hit after,
Ich wolde wende with ȝow · and the wey teche.' 4
'That were a long lettynge' · quath a lady in a skleire,
'What sholde we wommen · worche the whiles?'

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synnen M; syngun S; sinege G; seggen P. 304. cleueþ MISE; clyueþ P.
307. P *om. 2nd* so. IX. 4. wit P.

'Summe schul souwe sakkes · for schedyng of whete,
And ȝe wyues that habbeth wolle · worcheth hit faste,
Spynneth it spedily · spareth noght ȝour fyngres,
Bote ȝif hit beo haly day · or elles holy euen.
Loketh forth or linnene · and labereth ther-on faste.
The neodi and the nakede · nym ȝeeme hou thei liggen,
And cast on hem clothes for colde · for so wolde treuthe;
For I schal lene hem lyflode · but ȝif the lond fayle,
As longe as I liue · for vr lordes loue of heuene.
And ȝe, loueli ladies · with oure longe fyngres,
That habbeth selk, and sendel · souweth, whon tyme is,
Chesybles for chapeleyns · and churches to honoure;

'Somme shal sowe the sakke,' quod Piers · 'for shedyng of the whete;
And ȝe, louely ladyes · with ȝoure longe fyngres,
That ȝe han silke and sendal · to sowe, whan tyme is,
Chesibles for chapelleynes · cherches to honoure.
Wyues and wydwes · wolle and flex spynneth,
Maketh cloth, I conseille ȝow · and kenneth so ȝowre douȝtres;
The nedy and the naked · nymmeth hede how hij liggeth.
And casteth hem clothes · for so comaundeth Treuthe.
For I shal lene hem lyflode · but ȝif the londe faille,
Flesshe and bred bothe · to riche and to pore,
As longe as I lyue · for the lordes loue of heuene.
And alle manere of men · that thorw mete and drynke lybbeth,
Helpith hym to worche wiȝtliche · that wynneth ȝowre fode.'
'Bi Crist,' quod a knyȝte tho · 'he kenneth vs the best;
Ac on the teme trewly · tauȝte was I neuere.
Ac kenne me,' quod the knyȝte · 'and, bi Cryst, I wil assaye!'
'Bi seynt Poule,' quod Perkyn · 'ȝe profre ȝow so faire,
That I shal swynke and swete · and sowe for vs bothe,
And other laboures do for thi loue · al my lyf-tyme,
In couenaunt that thow kepe · holikirke and my-selue
Fro wastoures and fro wykked men · that this worlde struyeth.

A. 11. *From* UTH; V *omits this line.* 23. kennest HU; techest V. 25. kenne TU; tech V. 26. *This line is in* H *only.* B. 9. (*1st*) the WCRO; L *om.* C. 8. wete P. 9. wit P. 10. to sewen PE; MSG *om.* to.

And alle maner of men · that bi mete liuen,
Helpeth him worche wihtliche · that winneth oure fode.'
'Bi Crist,' quath a kniht tho · 'thou kennest vs the beste!
Saue o tyme trewely · thus tauht was I neuere!
Bote kenne me,' quod the kniht · 'and I-chul conne erie;
I wol helpe thee to labore · whil my lyf lastith.'
'Bi seint Peter,' quod Pers · 'for thou profrest the so lowe,
I schal swynken and sweten · and sowen for us bothe,
And eke labre for thi loue · al my lyf-tyme,
In couenaunt that thou kepe · holi chirche and my-seluen
From wastors and wikkede men · that wolden vs destruyen.

'Ich praye ȝow, for ȝoure profit' · quath Peers to the ladyes,
'That somme sewe the sak · for shedynge of the whete:
And ȝe worthly wommen · with ȝoure longe fyngres,
That ȝe on selke and sendel · sewen, whenne tyme ys,
Chesybles for chapelayns · churches to honoure.
Wyues and widowes · wolle and flax spynneth;
Conscience consaileth ȝow · cloth for to make
For profit of the poure · and plesaunce of ȝow-selue.
For ich shal lene hem lyflode · bote yf the lond faile,
As longe as ich lyue · for oure lordes loue in heuene.
And alle manere men · that by this molde buth susteyned,
Helpeth hem to worche wyghtly · that wynneth ȝoure fode.'
'By Cryst,' quath a knyȝt tho · 'he kenneth ous the beste;
Ac on the teeme trewely · tauht was ich neuere;
Ich wolde ich couthe,' quath the knyȝt · 'by Cryst and hus moder;
Ich wolde a-saye som tyme · for solas, as hit were.'
'Sykerliche, syre knyȝt' · seide Peers thenne,
'Ich shal swynke and swete · and sowe for us bothe,
And laboure for the while thou lyuest · al thy lyf-tyme,
In couenaunt that thou kepe · holy kirke and my-selue
Fro wastours and wyckede men · that this worlde struen.

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wenne P. 11. honure P. 16. lyue IMSEG; leue P. 18. whyghtly P. 20. trywely P. 23. knyiȝt P. 24. hus P. 25. lyuest EMS; leuest P. 26. kirke I; churche PEMS. my EIG; me PMS. 27. Fro IMSG; For PE. this IMSE; þus P.

And go thou hunte hardily · to hares and to foxes,
To beores and to bockes · that breketh menne hegges,
And fecche the hom faucuns · the foules to quelle;
For thei comen in-to my croft · and croppen my whete.'
Ful curteisliche the kniht · conseiued theose wordes;
'Be my pouwer, pers · I plihte the my trouthe
To folfulle the foreward · while that I may stonde!'
'But ȝit o poynt,' quod Pers · 'I preye the no more;
Loke thou teone no tenaunt · bote Treuthe wol assente:

And go hunte hardiliche · to hares and to foxes,
To bores and to brockes · that breketh adown myne hegges,
And go affaite the faucones · wilde foules to kille;
For suche cometh to my croft · and croppeth my whete.'
Curteislich the knyȝte thanne · comsed thise wordes,
'By my power, Pieres,' quod he · 'I pliȝte the my treuthe
To fulfille this forward · thowȝ I fiȝte sholde;
Als longe as I lyue · I shal the mayntene.'
'ȝe, and ȝit a poynt,' quod Pieres · 'I preye ȝow of more;
Loke ȝe tene no tenaunt · but Treuthe wil assent.
And thowgh ȝe mowe amercy hem · late Mercy be taxoure,
And Mekenesse thi mayster · maugre Medes chekes,
And thowgh pore men profre ȝow · presentis and ȝiftis,
Nym it nauȝte, an auenture · ȝe mowe it nauȝte deserue;
For thow shalt ȝelde it aȝein · at one ȝeres ende,
In a ful perillous place · purgatorie it hatte.
And mysbede nouȝte thi bonde-men · the better may thow spede;
Thowgh he be thyn vnderlynge here · wel may happe in heuene,
That he worth worthier sette · and with more blisse,
Than thow, bot thou do bette · and lyue as thow shulde;
Amice, ascende superius.
For in charnel atte chirche · cherles ben yuel to knowe,
Or a kniȝte fram a knaue there · knowe this in thin herte.
And that thow be trewe of thi tonge · and tales that thow hatie,
But if thei ben of wisdome or of witte · thi werkmen to chaste.
Holde with none harlotes · ne here nouȝte her tales,

B. 49. *From* C; LWRO *omit this line.* **C.** 28. hardileche P. 32. knyitȝ (*for* knyȝt) P. þes P. 35. ouere P. 36. tene IMSEG;

And 3if pore men profreth ou · presentes or 3iftes,
Taketh hem not, in auenture · 3e mouwen hem not deseruen;
For thou schalt 3elden hit a-3eyn · at one 3eeres ende,
In a wel perilous place · that purgatorie hette.
And mis-beode thou not thi bonde-men · the beter thou schalt spede,
And that thi-self be trewe of tonge · and tales thou hate,
Bote hit beo wisdam or wit · thi werkmen to chaste.
Hold not thou with harlotes · here not heore tales,

And go honte hardiliche · to hares and to foxes,
To bores and to bockes · that breketh a-doune menne hegges;
And faite thy faucones · to culle wylde foules;
For thei comen to my croft · my corn to defoule.'
Corteysliche the kny3t then · comsede these wordes;
'By my̆ power, Peers · ich plyghte the my treuthe,
To defende the in faith · fyghte thauh ich sholde.'

'And 3ut on poynt,' quath Peers · 'ich praye 3ow ouermore;
Loke 3e tene no tenaunt · bote yf Treuth wolle assente.
Whenne 3e amercyn eny man · let Mercy be taxour,
And Meknesse thy maister · maugre Mede chekes.
Thauh poure men profre 3ou · presentes and 3iftes,
Nym hit nat, an aunter · thow mowe hit nat deserue;
For thow shalt 3ulde, so may be · and somdel a-bygge.

Mys-beede nouht thy bondemen · the bet may thou spede;

Thauh he be here thyn vnderling · in heuene, paraunter,
He worth rather receyued · and reuerentloker sette;

Amice, ascende superius.
At churche in the charnel · cheorles aren vuel to knowe,
Other a knyght fro a knaue · other a queyne fro a queene.
Hit by-cometh to a knyght · to be curteys and hende,
Trewe of hys tonge · tales loth to huyre,
Bote thei be of bounte · of batailes and of treuthe.
Hald nat of harlotes · huyre nat here tales,

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tuene P. 37. Wenne P. 39. presantes P. 3eftes P. 42. boundemen P. thou EMSG; þe P.

And nomeliche atte mete · suche men eschuwe,
For thei ben the deueles disours · I do the to vndurstonde.'
'Ich a-sente, be seint Iem!' · seide the kniht thenne,
'For to worche bi thi word · while my lyf dureth.'
'And I schal a-paraile me,' quod Perkin · 'in pilgrimes wyse,
And wende with ou the rihte wei · til ȝe Treuthe fynde.'
He caste on his clothes · i-clouted and i-hole,
His cokeres and his coffus · for colde of his nayles,
He heng an hoper on his bac · in stude of a scrippe,
A busschel of bred-corn · he bringeth ther-inne:
'For I wol souwen hit my-self · and seththen with ou wende.

And nameliche atte mete · suche men eschue;
For it ben the deueles disoures · I do the to vnderstande.'
'I assente, bi seynt Iame' · seyde the kniȝte thanne,
'Forto worche bi thi wordes · the while my lyf dureth.'
'And I shal apparaille me,' quod Perkyn · 'in pilgrimes wise,
And wende with ȝow I wil · til we fynde Treuthe;
And cast on me my clothes · yclouted and hole,
My cokeres and my coffes · for colde of my nailles,
And hange myn hoper at myn hals · in stede of a scrippe;
A busshel of bredcorne · brynge me ther-inne;
For I wil sowe it my-self · and sitthenes wil I wende
To pylgrymage as palmers don · pardoun forto haue.
Ac who so helpeth me to erie · or sowen here ar I wende,
Shal haue leue, bi owre lorde · to lese here in heruest,
And make hem mery there-mydde · maugre who-so bigruccheth it.
And alkyn crafty men · that konne lyuen in treuthe,
I shal fynden hem fode · that feithfulliche libbeth.
Saue Iakke the iogeloure · and Ionet of the stues,
And Danyel the dys-playere · and Denote the baude,
And frere the faytoure · and folke of his ordre,

And Robyn the rybaudoure · for his rusty wordes.
Treuthe tolde me ones · and bad me tellen it after,
Deleantur de libro viuentium · I shulde nouȝte dele with hem;

A. 50. to THU; V *om.* 53. kirke I; churche PES. 57. wit P. 63. palmers EIS; pilgrymes P. 68. I—hem T; V *om.* **C.** 51. eschywe P.

For hose helpeth me to heren · or eny thing to swynken,
He schal haue, beo vr lord · the more huyre in heruest,
And make him murie with the corn · hose hit euere bigruccheth.
And alle kunnes craftus men · that cunne lyuen with treuthe,
I schal fynden hem heore fode · that feithfuliche lyuen;
Saue Iacke the iogelour · and Ionete of the stuyues,
And Robert the ribaudour · for his rousti wordes.
Treuthe tauhte hit me ones · and bad me telle hit forther,
Deleantur de libro · I ne shulde not dele with hem;

Nameliche atte mete · suche men eschewe;
Hit ben the deueles disours · to drawe men to synne.
Contreplede nat conscience · ne holy kirke ryghtes.'
'Ich assente, by seynt Gyle' · seyde the knyght thenne,
'For to worche by thy witt · and my wyf bothe.'
'Ich shal aparaile me,' quath Perkyn · 'in pylgrymes wyse,
And wende with alle tho · that wolle lyue in treuthe.'
He caste on hym hus clothes · of alle kynne craftes,
Hus cokeres and hus cuffes · as kynde witt hym tauhte,
And heng hus hoper on hus hals · in stede of a scrippe;
A boussel of bred-corn · brouht was ther-ynne.
'For ich wolle sowe hit my-self · and sitthe wol y-wende
To pylgrimages, as palmers don · pardon to wynne.
My plouh-fot shal be my pyk-staf · and picche a-two the rotes,*
And help my culter to kerue · and clanse the forwes.
And alle that helpen me to erye · other elles to weden,
Shal haue leue, by oure lorde · to go and glene after,
And make hym murye ther-myd · maugre ho by-grucche.
And alle kynne crafty men · that conne lyue in treuthe,
Ich shal fynde hem fode · that feythfullech lybben;
Saf Iack the iogelour · and Ionette of the styues,
And Danyel the dees-pleyere · and Denote the baude,
And al-so frere faytour · and folke of that ordre,
That lollers and loseles · for leel men halden,
And Robyn the rybaudour · for hus rusty wordes.
For Treuthe tolde me ones · and bade me telle hit forthere,
Deleantur de libro uiuencium · ich sholde nat dele with hem;

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71. (1*st*) the IMG; P *om.* 72. denete P. 73. that IMSEG; þe P. 76. me IMSEG; P *om.* hit MS; P *om.* * Cf. A. vii. 96; B. vi. 105; p. 202.

Holi churche is holden of hem · no tithe to taken;
Et cum iustis non scribantur;
Thei ben a-scaped good thrift · god hem amende!'
Dame werche-whon-tyme-is · hette Pers wyf,
His douhter hette Do-riht-so- · or-thi-dame-wol-the-bete,
His sone hette Soffre-thi-souereyns- · for-to-han-heor-wille-
And-deeme-hem-not-for-ȝif-thou-do- · thou-schalt-hit-deore-abugge.
'Let god worthe with al · for so his woord techith;
For nou icham old and hor · and haue of myn owne,

For holicherche is hote of hem · no tythe to take,
Quia cum iustis non scribantur;
They ben ascaped good auenture · now god hem amende!'
Dame Worche-whan-tyme-is · Pieres wyf hiȝte,
His douȝter hiȝte Do-riȝte-so- · or-thi-dame-shal-the-bete,
His sone hiȝte Suffre-thi-souereynes- · to-hauen-her-wille-
Deme-hem-nouȝte-for-if-thow-doste- · thow-shalt-it-dere-abugge.

'Late god yworth with al · for so his worde techeth;

For now I am olde and hore · and haue of myn owen,
To penaunce and to pilgrimage · I wil passe with thise other.
For-thi I wil, or I wende · do wryte my biqueste.

In dei nomine, amen · I make it my-seluen.
He shal haue my soule · that best hath yserued it,
And fro the fende it defende · for so I bileue,
Til I come to his acountes · as my *credo* me telleth,
To haue a relees and a remissioun · on that rental I leue.
The kirke shal haue my caroigne · and kepe my bones;

A. 71. werche THU; V *om.* 75. *From* THU; V *omits this line.*

To penaunce and to pilgrimage · I wol passe with this othure.
For-thi I wole, ar I wende · write my testament.
In dei nomine, amen · I make hit mi-seluen.
He schal haue my soule · that best hath deseruet,
And defende hit from the fend · for so I beo-leeue,
Til I come to myn a-countes · as my crede me telleth,
To ha reles and remission · on that rental I be-leeue.
The chirche schal haue my careyne · and kepe mi bones;

For holy churche hoteth · of hem to aske no tythe,
Quia cum iustis non scribantur;
Thei ben ascaped good aunter · now god hem amende!'
Dame Worche-when-tyme-is · Peers wyf hyhte;
Hus douhter hihte Do-ryght-so- · other-thy-damme-shal-the-bete;
Hus sone hihte Suffre- · thy-souereynes-haue-here-wil-
Deme-hem-nouht-for-yf-thow-do- · thow-shalt-dere-abigge.
'Consaile nat the comune · the kyng to displese,
Ne hem that han lawes to loke · lacke hem nat, ich hote,
Let god worthe with al · as holy writ techeth;
Super cathedram Moysi sedent, et cetera;
Maistres, as the meyres ben · and grete men senatours,
What thei comaunde as by the kyng · contrepleide hit neuere,
Al that they hoten, ich hote · heyliche, thow suffre hem;
By here warnyng and worchyng · worch thow ther-after;
Omnia que dicunt, facite et seruate;
Ac after here doynge do thow nat · my dere sone,' quath Peers.
'For now ich am old and hor · and haue of myn owene,
To penaunces and to pilgrimages · ich wol passe with othere;
For-thi ich wolle, er ich wende · do wryten my byquyste.

TESTAMENTUM PETRI PLOUHMAN.

In dei nomine, amen · ich make hit my-self.
He shal haue my soule · that alle soules made,
And defende hit fro the feende · and so is my by-leyue,
Til ich come to hus acountes · as my crede telleth,
To haue remissioun and relees · on that rental ich leue.
The kirke shal haue my caroyne · and kepe my bones,

C. 80. wen P. 81. heithe P; *see* l. 82. 89. they IES; þe P. 98, 99. *From* IG; P *om.* 100. kirke IM; churche P.

For of my corn and catel · heo craueth the tithe.
I payede him prestly · for peril of my soule,
He is holden, ich hope · to haue me in muynde,
And munge me in his memorie · among alle Cristene.
Mi wyf schal haue that I won · with treuthe, and no more,
And dele a-mong my frendes · and my deore children.
For thauh I dye this day · my dettes beoth i-quit;
I bar hom that I borwede · er I to bedde eode,
And with the residue and the remenaunt · by the rode of Chestre!
I wol worschupe ther-with · Treuthe in my lyue,
And ben his pilgrym atte plouȝ · for pore mennes sake.
Mi plouh-pote schal be my pyk · and posshen atte rootes,*
And helpe my coltre to kerue · and close the vorwes.'

For of my corne and catel · he craued the tythe.
I payed it hym prestly · for peril of my soule,
For-thy is he holden, I hope · to haue me in his masse,
And mengen in his memorye · amonge alle Crystene.
My wyf shal haue of that I wan · with treuthe, and nomore,
And dele amonge my douȝtres · and my dere children.
For thowghe I deye to-daye · my dettes ar quitte,
I bare home that I borwed · ar I to bedde ȝede.
And with the residue and the remenaunte · bi the rode of Lukes!
I wil worschip ther-with · Treuthe bi my lyue,
And ben his pilgryme atte plow · for pore mennes sake.
My plow-fote shal be my pyk-staf · and picche atwo the rotes,*
And helpe my culter to kerue · and clense the forwes.'
Now is Perkyn and his pilgrymes · to the plowe faren;
To erie this halue-acre · holpyn hym manye.
Dikeres and deluere̊s · digged vp the balkes;
There-with was Perkyn apayed · and preysed hem faste.
Other werkeman there were · that wrouȝten ful ȝerne,
Eche man in his manere · made hym-self to done,
And some to plese Perkyn · piked vp the wedes.
At heighe pryme Peres · lete the plowe stonde,
To ouersen hem hym-self · and who-so best wrouȝte,
He shulde be huyred ther-after · whan heruest-tyme come.
And thanne seten somme · and songen atte nale,
And hulpen erie his half-acre · with 'how! trollilolli!'

Now is Pers and the pilgrimes to the plouh i-fare;
To heren this half-acre · helpen him ful monye.
Dykers and deluers · dikeden vp the balkes;
Ther-with was Perkyn a-payed · and preisede hem ȝerne.
Othur werk-men ther weren · that wrouȝten ful monye,
Vche mon in his maner · made him to done;
And summe, to plese Perkyn · pykeden vp the weodes.
At heiȝ prime Perkyn · lette the plouȝ stonde,
While that he ouer-seȝe him-self · ho that best wrouhte;
He schulde ben huyred ther-aftur · whon heruest-tyme come.
Thenne seten summe · and songen atte ale,
And holpen him to herien · with 'hey! trolly-lolly!'

For of my corn and catel · he crauede my tythe.
Ich payed hit prestliche · for peril of my soule,
He is holdinge, ich hope · to haue me in hus masse,
And menge me in hus memorie · among alle Cristine.
My wyf shal haue of that ich wan · with treuthe, and no more,
And dele hit among my douhtres · and my dere children.
For thauh ich deyde thys day · my dettes ben quyted;
Ich bar hom that ich borwede · er ich to bedde ȝeode.
With the resydue and remenaunt · by the rode of Lukes,
Ich wolle worshupe ther-with · Treuthe al my lyf,
And be a pilgrym atte plouh · for profyt of poure and ryche.'
Now Perkyn with the pilgrimes · to the plouh is faren;
To eryen hus half-aker · holpen hym menye.
Dykers and deluers · diggeden vp the balkes;
Ther-with was Perkyn apayed · and paied wel here hyre.
Other werkmen ther were · that wrouhten ful ȝurne;
Eche man in hus manere · made hym-self to done;
And somme to plese Perkyn · pykede aweye the wedes.
Atte hye pryme Peers · let the plouh stonde,
And ouer-seyh hem hym-self · ho so best wrouhte,
He sholde be hyred ther-after · when heruest-tyme come.
Thenne seten some · and songen atten ale,
And holpen to erie this half-acre · with 'hoy! troly! lolly!'

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* Cf. C. ix. 64; p. 199. C. 103. his (*for* is) P. 111. pulgrym P. 121. wen P.

'Now, be the prince of paradys' · quath Pers tho in wraththe,
'Bote ȝe rysen the rather · and rape ȝow to worche,
Schal no greyn that heer groweth · gladen ow at neode,
And thauh ȝe dyen for de-faute · the deuel haue that recche!'
Thenne weore the faytors a-ferd · and feynede hem blynde,
And summe leiden the legges a-liri · as suche losels cunne,
And playneden hem to pers · with suche pitouse wordes:
'We haue no lymes to labore with · vr lord we hit thonken,
Bote we preyeth for ou, Pers · and for oure plouh bothe,
That god for his grace · oure greyn multiplye,
And ȝelde ow for oure almus · that ȝe ȝiuen vs here!
For we mowe nouthur swynke ne swete · such seknes vs eileth.'

'Now, bi the peril of my soule!' quod Pieres · al in pure tene,
'But ȝe arise the rather · and rape ȝow to worche,
Shal no greyne that groweth · glade ȝow at nede;
And though ȝe deye for dole · the deuel haue that reccheth!'
Tho were faitoures aferde · and feyned hem blynde,
Somme leyde here legges aliri · as suche loseles conneth,
And made her mone to Pieres · and preyde hym of grace:
'For we haue no lymes to laboure with · lorde, y-graced be ȝe!
Ac we preye for ȝow, Pieres · and for ȝowre plow bothe,
That god of his grace · ȝowre grayne multiplye,
And ȝelde ȝow of ȝowre almesse · that ȝe ȝiue vs here;
For we may nouȝte swynke ne swete · suche sikenesse vs eyleth.'
'If it be soth,' quod Pieres, 'that ȝe seyne · I shal it sone asspye!
ȝe ben wastoures, I wote wel · and Treuthe wote the sothe!
And I am his olde hyne · and hiȝte hym to warne
Which thei were in this worlde · his werkemen appeyred.
ȝe wasten that men wynnen · with trauaille and with tene,
Ac Treuthe shal teche ȝow · his teme to dryue,
Or ȝe shal ete barly bred · and of the broke drynke.
But if he be blynde or broke-legged · or bolted with yrnes,
He shal ete whete bred · and drynke with my-selue,
Tyl god of his goodnesse · amendement hym sende.

A. 126. *Read* heren (*as in* 60, 99); eren T; swynken V. 133. *From* T; V *omits this line.* hem; *miswritten* hym T. B. 138. (*1st*) or WCRO;

'3if hit beo soth that 3e seyen,' quod Pers · 'sone I schal a-spye!
3e beoth wastors, I wot · and Treuthe wot the sothe!
Icham his holde hyne · and ou3te him to warne
Whuche wastors in world · his werk-men distruy3en.
3e eten that thei schulden eten · that heren for vs alle;
Bote Treuthe schal techen ow · his teeme for to dryue,
Bothe to sowen and to setten · and sauen his tilthe,
Gaste crowen from his corn · and kepen his beestes,
Or 3e schulle ete barly bred · and of the brok drynke.
Bote heo beo blynde or broke-schonket · or bedreden liggen,
Thei schul haue as good as I · so me god helpe,
Til god of his grace · gare hem to arise.

Quath Peers the plouhman · al in pure tene,
'Bote 3e aryse the rathere · and rape 3ow to worche,
Shal no greyn that here groweth · gladen 3ow at neede;
And thauh 3e deye for deul · the deuel haue that recche!'
Tho were faitours aferede · and feyned3 hem blynde,
And leyden here legges a-lyry · as suche lorelles conneth,
And maden here mone to Peers · how thei mowe nat worche:
'Ac we prayeth for 3ow, Peers · and for 3oure plouh bothe,
That god for hus grace · 3oure grayn multiplie,
And 3elde 3ow of 3oure almesse · that 3e 3euen us here.
We may nayther swynke ne swete · suche syknesse ous ayleth;
We haue none lymes to laborie with · lord god we thonketh.'

'3oure praiers,' quath Peers · 'and 3e parfit were,
Myght help, as ich hope; · ac hye Treuthe wolde
That no faiterye were founde · in folk that gon a-begged.
3e ben wastours, ich wot wel · that wasten and deuouren
That leel land-tylynge men · leelliche byswynken.
Ac Treuthe shal teche 3ow · hus teeme for to dryue,
Other 3e shulle ete barliche brede · and of the brok drynke,
Bote 3e be blynde other brokelegged · other bolted with yren.
Suche poure,' quath Peers · 'shullen partye with my goodes,
Bothe of my corn and of my cloth · to kepe hem fro defaute;

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and L. C. 125. aryse SIM; ryse P. 127. that IMSEG; þe P. 131. fore (*2nd time*) P. 132. multeplie P. 133. 3ulde P. 3euene hus P. 140. leelleche P. 143, 144. wit P.

Ancres and hermytes · that holdeth hem in heore celles
Schulen habben of myn almus · al the while I liue,
I-nouh vche day at non · but no more til a morwe,
Leste the fend and heore flesch · fouleden heore soules;
Ones at noon is i-nouȝ · that no werk ne vseth,
He abydeth wel the bet · that bommeth not to ofte.'
Thenne wastours gunne arise · and wolden han i-fouhte;

Ac ȝe myȝte trauaille as Treuthe wolde · and take mete and huyre
To kepe kyne in the felde · the corne fro the bestes,
Diken or deluen · or dyngen vppon sheues,
Or helpe make morter · or bere mukke a-felde.
In lecherye and in losengerye · ȝe lyuen, and in sleuthe,
And al is thorw suffrance · that veniaunce ȝow ne taketh.
Ac ancres and heremytes · that eten noȝt but at nones,
And namore er morwe · myne almesse shul thei haue,
And of my catel to cope hem with · that han cloistres and cherches.
Ac Robert Renne-aboute · shal nowȝte haue of myne,
Ne posteles, but they preche conne · and haue powere of the bisschop;
They shal haue payne and potage · and make hem-self at ese,
For it is an vnresonable religioun · that hath riȝte nouȝte of certeyne.'
And thanne gan a wastoure to wrath hym · and wolde haue yfouȝte,
And to Pieres the plowman · he profered his gloue;
A Brytonere, a braggere · a-bosted Pieres als,
And bad hym go pissen with his plow · for-pyned schrewe!
'Wiltow or neltow · we wil haue owre wille,
Of thi flowre and of thi flessche · fecche whan vs liketh,
And make vs murie ther-myde · maugre thi chekes!'
Thanne Pieres the plowman · pleyned hym to the knyȝte,
To kepe hym, as couenaunte was · fram cursed shrewes,
And fro this wastoures wolueskynnes · that maketh the worlde dere:

A. 141. one H; he TU; and V. 143. screwe V. 146. *From* UTH;

To Pers the plouh-mon · one profrede his gloue,
A Brutiner, a braggere · a-bostede him alse,
And bad go pisse him with his plouh · pillede schrewe!
'For we wolen habbe of thi flour · wol thou so nulle thou,
And of thi flesch fecche · whon that vs lyketh,
And make vs merye therwith · maugre thi chekes!'
Thenne Pers plouh-mon · playnede him to the kniht,
To kepen him, as couenaunt was · from cursede schrewes,
From wastors that wayten · winners to schende.

Ancres and heremites · that eten bote at nones,
And freres that flateren nat · and poure folke syke,
What! ich and myne · wolleth fynde hem that hem needeth.'

Thenne gan Wastour to wratth · and wolde haue fouhten,
And to Peers plouhman · proferede to fighte,

And bad hym 'go pisse with hus plouh · peyuesshe shrewe!'
A Brytonere com braggynge · a-bosted Peers al-so;
'Wolle thow, ne wolle thow · we wolleth habbe oure wil,
Bothe thy flour and thy flessh · fecchen when ous lyketh,
And make ous myrye ther-myd · maugre ho bygruccheth!'
Peers the plouhman tho · pleynede to the knyght,
To kepe hym and hus catel · as couenaunt was bytwyne hem:
'Awreke me of these wastours · that maken thys worlde dere;

V *omits the line.* **B.** 147. no3t WCO; LR *om.* **C.** 154. wen P. 158. worde P.

Curteisliche the kniht · as his kuynde wolde,
Warnede wastors · and wissede hem do betere;
'Or ȝe schul a-bugge hit bi the lawe · bi the ordre that I bere!'
'I was not wont to worche,' quod a wastour · 'ȝit wol I not biginne!'—
And lette luytel of the lawe · and lasse of the kniht,
And countede Pers at a peose · and his plouh bothe,
And manasede him and his men · whon that thei next metten.
'Nou be the peril of my soule,' · quath Pers the plouh-mon,
I schal a-peiren ow alle · for oure proude wordes!'
And hoped aftur Hunger tho · that herde him atte furste:

'For tho waste and wynnen nouȝte · and that ilke while
Worth neuere plente amonge the poeple · ther-while my plow liggeth.'
Curteisly the knyȝte thanne · as his kynde wolde,
Warned Wastoure · and wissed hym bettere,
'Or thow shalt abugge by the lawe · by the ordre that I bere!'
'I was nouȝt wont to worche,' quod Wastour · 'and now wil I nouȝt bigynne!'—
And lete liȝte of the lawe · and lasse of the knyȝte,
And sette Pieres at a pees · and his plow bothe,
And manaced Pieres and his men · ȝif thei mette eft sone.
'Now, by the peril of my soule!' quod Pieres · 'I shal apeyre ȝow alle!'
And houped after Hunger · that herd hym atte firste:
'A-wreke me of thise wastoures,' quod he · 'that this worlde schendeth!'
Hunger in haste tho · hent Wastour bi the mawe,
And wronge hym so bi the wombe · that bothe his eyen wattered;
He buffeted the Britoner · aboute the chekes,
That he loked like a lanterne · al his lyf after.
He bette hem so bothe · he barste nere here guttes;
Ne hadde Pieres with a pese-lof · preyed Hunger to cesse,
They hadde ben doluen bothe · ne deme thow non other.
'Suffre hem lyue,' he seyde · 'and lete hem ete with hogges,

A. 152. (*1st*) the THU; V *om.* *read* wastor. 163. *See* l. 142. 161. wastour THU; wastors V; bretoner TH; brytoner U; boye V.

'A-wrek me on this wastors,' quod Pers · 'that this world schendeth!'
Hongur in haste · hente Wastor bi the mawe,
And wrong him so be the wombe · that bothe his eȝen watreden,
And buffetede the Brutiner · aboute bothe his chekes;
He lokede lyk a lanterne · al his lyf after.
He beot so the boyes · he barst neih heore ribbes,
Nedde Pers with a peose-lof · i-preyed him to leue;
And with a benene bat · i-bot hem by-twene,
And hutte Hongur ther-with · a-midde bothe his lippes,
And he bledde in-to the bodiward · a bolleful of gruwel;
Nedde the fisicien furst · defendet him water

Thei counte nat of cursyng · ne holy kirke dreden;
Ther worth no plente,' quath Peers · 'and the plouh ligge.'
Curtesliche the knyght then · as hus kynde wolde,
Warned Wastour · and wissede hym betere,
'Other ich shal bete the by the law · and brynge the in stockes.'
'Ich was nat woned to wirche,' quath Wastour · 'and ich wolle nat now bygynne,'
And let lyght of the lawe · and lasse of the knyght,
And sette Peers at a pese · pleyne hym wher he wolde.
'Now, by Crist,' quath Peers · 'y shal apeyre ȝow alle!'
And hopede after Hunger · that herde him at the ferste.
'Ich praye the,' quath Peers tho · 'pur charite, sire Honger,
Awreke me of these wastours · for the knyght wol nat.'
Honger hente in haste · Wastour by the mawe,
And wrang hym by the wombe · that al waterede hus eyen.
He buffated the Brutener · a-boute the chekes,
That he loked lyk a lanterne · al hus lyf after.
He bet hem so bothe · he barst neih hure guttes,
Ne hadde Peers with a peese-lof · prayede hym by-leue.
'Honger, haue mercy of hem,' quath Peers · 'and let me ȝeue hem benes;
And that was bake for Bayarde · may be here bote.'

C. 159. kirke I; churche PES. 160. pleynte P. 164. wond P. to IMSG; P *om.* 166. wer P. 168. him IMSG; P *om.* 170. þeese P. 176. wit P. 178. bayerde P.

To abate the barli-bred · and the benes i-grounde,
Thei hedden beo ded bi this day · and doluen al warm.
Thenne faytors for fere · flowen to bernes,
And flapten on with fleiles · from morwe til euen,
That Honger nas not hardi · vp for to loke,
For a potful of peosun · that Pers hedde i-mad.
An hep of hermytes · henten heom spades,
And doluen drit and donge · to dutte Honger oute.
Blynde and bedraden · weore botned a thousent,

Or elles benes and bren · ybaken togideres,
Or elles melke and mene ale' · thus preyed Pieres for hem.
Faitoures for fere her-of · flowen in-to bernes,
And flapten on with flayles · fram morwe til euen,
That Hunger was nou3t so hardy · on hem for to loke,
For a potful of peses · that Peres hadde ymaked.
An heep of heremites · henten hem spades,
And ketten here copes · and courtpies hem made,
And wenten as werkemen · with spades and with schoueles,
And doluen and dykeden · to dryue aweye hunger.
Blynde and bedreden · were botened a thousande,
That seten to begge syluer · sone were thei heled.

For that was bake for Bayarde · was bote for many hungry,
And many a beggere for benes · buxome was to swynke,
And eche a pore man wel apayed · to haue pesen for his huyre,
And what Pieres preyed hem to do · as prest as a sperhauke.

And there-of was Peres proude · and put hem to werke,
And 3af hem mete as he my3te aforth · and mesurable huyre.

A. 186. Al THU; V *om.* coppes P. 187. P *om.* hunger. C. 180. whit P. 185. copes EIMS; 189. wit P. 191. of ESG; and P.

That lyȝen for blynde · and for broke-legget
Vppon softe Sonenday · bi the heiȝe weye;
Hungur hem helede · with an hot cake.
Lome mennes limes · weore lythet that tyme,
And bi-come knaues · to kepe Pers beestes,
And preyeden for charite · with Pers for to dwelle,
Al for couetyse of his corn · to caste a-wey Hunger.
Pers was proud ther-of · and put hem in offys,
And ȝaf hem mete and moneye · as thei mihte deseruen.

Tho were faitours a-fered · and flowen to Peersses bernes,
And flapten on with flailes · fro morwe til euene,
That Honger was nat hardy · on hem for to loke,
For a potful of potage · that Peersses wyf made.
An hep of eremites · henten hem spades,
Spitten and spradde donge · in despit of Hunger.
Thei coruen here copes · and courtepies hem made,
And wenten as workmen · to weden and mowen;
Al for drede of here deth · suche dyntes ȝaf Hunger.
Blynde and brokeleggede · he botnede a thousande,
And lame men he lechede · with longen of bestes.
Preestes and other peple · to Peers thei drowen,
And freres of alle fyue ordres · al for fere of Hunger.
For that that was bake for Bayarde · was bote for menye hungry,
Drosenes and dregges · drynke for menye beggeres.
Ther was no lad that lyuede · that ne lowede hym to Peers,
To be hus hole hewe · thauh he hadde no more
Bute lyf-lode for hus labour · and hus lone at nones.
Tho was Peers ful proude · and putte hem alle to werke,
In daubyng and in deluyng · in donge a-feld berynge,
In thresshynge, in thecchynge · in thwytynge of pynnes,
And alle kynne trewe craft · that man couthe deuyse.
Was no beggere so bolde · bote-yf he blynde were,
That dorst with-sitte that Peeres seyde · for fere of syre Hunger.
And Peers was proud ther-of · and putte hem alle to swynke,
And ȝaf hem mete and monye · as they myght deseruen.

193. drenke P. 194. P *om.* no; *see* l. 201. 195. hewe I; hywe P; hyne EMSG. 202. wit-sitte P. 203. swynge P.

Thenne hedde Peers pite · and preiede Hunger to wende
Hom to his oune hurde · and holden him ther for euere.
'And ȝit I preye the,' quod Pers · 'er thou passe henne,
Of bidders and of beggers · what is best to done?
I wot wel whon thou art i-went · thei wol worchen ful ille;
And mischef hit maketh · thei beoth so meke nouthe,
And for de-faute of foode · thus faste thei worchen;
And heo beoth my blodi bretheren · for god bouȝte vs alle.
Treuthe tauhte me ones · to louen hem vchone,
And helpen hem of alle thyng · aftur that hem neodeth.
ȝit wolde I witen ȝif thou wustest · what were the beste,

Thanne hadde Peres pite · and preyed Hunger to wende
Home in-to his owne erde · and holden hym there.

'For I am wel awroke now · of wastoures, thorw thi myȝte.
Ac I preye the, ar thow passe' · quod Pieres to Hunger,
'Of beggeres and of bidderes · what best be to done?
For I wote wel, be thow went · thei wil worche ful ille;
For myschief it maketh · thei beth so meke nouthe,
And for defaute of her fode · this folke is at my wille.

They are my blody bretheren,' quod Pieres · 'for god bouȝte vs alle;
Treuthe tauȝte me ones · to louye hem vchone,
And to helpen hem of alle thinge · ay as hem nedeth.
And now wolde I witen of the · what were the best,
And how I myȝte amaistrien hem · and make hem to worche.'
'Here now,' quod Hunger · 'and holde it for a wisdome:
Bolde beggeres and bigge · that mowe her bred biswynke,
With houndes bred and hors bred · holde vp her hertis,
Abate hem with benes · for bollyng of her wombe;
And ȝif the gomes grucche · bidde hem go swynke,
And he shal soupe swettere · whan he it hath deseruid.
And if thow fynde any freke · that fortune hath appeyred,
Or any maner fals men · fonde thow suche to cnowe;
Conforte hem with thi catel · for Crystes loue of heuene,

B. 206. to WCRO; L *om.* 214. An (*for* And) L. 223. hem RO; hym LW. C. 206. in IMSEG; on P. 216. wit P. 217. ben EM;

And hou I mihte a-maystren hem · and maken hem to worche.'
'Here nou,' quod Hunger · 'and holde hit for wisdam,
Bolde bidders and beggers · that mowen her mete biswinke,
With houndes bred and horse bred · hold vp heor hertes,
And bamme hem with bones · for bollyng of heore wombes;
And ȝif the gomes grucchen · bidde hem go swynke,
And thei schule soupe the swettore · whon thei han hit deseruet.
And ȝif thou fyndest eny freik · that fortune hath a-peiret
With fuir, or with fals folk · fonde suche to knowe;
Cumforte hem with thi catel · for Cristes loue of heuene,

Tho hadde Peers pite · of alle poure puple,
And bad Hunger in haste · hyhe out of contre
Home in-to his owen erthe · and halde hym ther euere—
'For ich am wel awreke · of wastours thorw thy myghte.
Ac ich praye the,' quath Peers · 'Hunger, er thow wende,
Of beggers and of bydders · what best be to done?
For ich wot wel, be thou went · worche thei wolle ful ylle;
Meschief hit maketh · thei ben so meke nouthe,
And for defaute this folke · folwen my hestes.
Hit is no thyng for loue · thei labour thus faste,
Bote for fere of famyn · in faith,' seide Peers;
'Ys no final loue with this folke · for al here faire speche;
And hit ben my blody brothren · for god bouhte vs alle.
Treuthe tauhte me ones · to louye hem echone,
And helpen hem of alle thyng · ay as hem nedeth.
Now wolde ich wite, or thow wentest · what were the beste,
How ich myghte a-maistren hem · to louye and laboure
For here lyflode; · lere me, syre Hunger.'
'Now herkne,' quath Hunger · 'and hold hit for a wysdome;
Bolde beggeres and bygge ' that mowe here bred byswynke,
With houndes bred and hors bred · hele hem when thei hungren,
And a-bane hem with benes · for bollynge of here wombe.
And yf the gromes grucche · bid hem go swynke,
And he shal soupe the swettere · when he hath deserued.
And yf thow fynde eny folke · wham false men han apaired,
Comforte hem with thy catel · for so comaundeth treuthe;

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aren PG. 220. white P. 224. And bolde P; IMSEG *om.* And. 228. wen P. 229. wam P.

Loue hem, and lene hem · so the lawe of kuynde wole.
And alle manere of men · that thou may3t aspye,
That neodi ben, or naket · and nou3t haue to spende,
With mete or with moneye · mak hem fare the betere,
Or with word or with werk · while that thou art here.
Mak the frendes ther-with · for so seint Matheu techeth,
Facite vobis amicos de mammona iniquitatis.'
'I wolde not greue god,' quod Pers · 'for al the gold on ground;
Miht I sunneles don as thou seist?' · seide Pers thenne.

Loue hem and lene hem · so lawe of god techeth:—
Alter alterius onera portate.
And alle maner of men · that thow my3te asspye,
That nedy ben, and nau3ty · helpe hem with thi godis,
Loue hem and lakke hem nou3te · late god take the veniaunce;
Theigh thei done yuel · late thow god y-worthe:—
Michi vindictam, et ego retribuam.
And if thow wilt be graciouse to god · do as the gospel techeth,
And biloue the amonges low men · so shaltow lacche grace,
Facite vobis amicos de mamona iniquitatis.'
'I wolde nou3t greue god,' quod Piers · 'for al the good on grounde;
Mi3te I synnelees do as thow seist?' · seyde Pieres thanne.
'3e, I bihote the,' quod Hunger · 'or ellis the bible lieth;
Go to Genesis the gyaunt · the engendroure of vs alle;
'*In sudore* and swynke · thow shalt thi mete tilye,
And laboure for thi lyflode' · and so owre lorde hy3te.
And Sapience seyth the same · I seigh it in the bible;
'*Piger pro frigore* · no felde nolde tilye,
And therfore he shal begge and bidde · and no man bete his hunger.'
Mathew with mannes face · mouthed thise wordes,
That *seruus nequam* had a nam · and for he wolde nou3te chaffare,
He had maugre of his maistre · for euermore after;

B. 228. y-worthe W; aworthe L. 229. wilt WCO; wil L. 230. biloue WCO; bilow L. C. 250. alowede P.

'3e, I be-hote the,' quod Hunger · 'or elles the bible ly3eth;
Go to Genesis the Ieaunt · engendrure of vs alle;
In sudore and swynk · thou schalt thi mete tilie,
And labre for thi lyflode' · for so vr lord hi3te.
And Sapiens seith the same · I saih hit in the bible;
'*Piger propter frigus* · no feld nolde he tilie,
He schal go bidde and begge · and no mon beete his hunger.'
Matheu the monnes face · he mommeth theose wordes,
'*Seruus nequam* hedde npnam · and for he nolde hit vsen,
He hedde maugre of his maister · euere more aftur;
Auferte ab illo mnam, et date illi, etc.

Loue hem and lene hem · so lawe of kynde wolde;
Alter alterius onera portate.
And alle manere men · that thow myght aspye
In meschief other in mal-ese · and thow mowe hem helpe,
Loke by thy lyf · let hem nouht for-fare.
Yf thow hast wonne ouht wickeliche · wisliche dispende hit;
Facite uobis amicos de mammona iniquitatis.'
'Ich wolde nat greuye God,' quath Peers · 'for al the good on erthe;
Myghte ich synneles do as thou seist?' · seide Peers plouhman.
'3e, ich by-hote the,' quath Hunger · 'other elles the byble lyeth;
Go to oure by-gynnynge · tho god the worlde made,
As wise men han ywryte · and as wittnesseth *genesis*,
That seith, with swynke and with swot · and swetynge face
By-tulye and by-trauaile · treuly oure lyf-lode;
In labore et sudore uultus tui uesceris pane tuo.
And Salamon the sage · with the same acordeth,
The slowe caytyf for colde · wolde no corn tulye;
In somere for hus slewthe · he shal haue defaute,
And gon abrybeth and beggen · and no man bete hus hunger.
Piger propter frigus noluit arare; mendicabit in hyeme et non dabitur ei.
Matheu maketh mencion · of a man that lente
Hus seluer to thre manere men · and menynge that thei sholde
Chaffare and cheeue ther-with · in chele and in hete;
And he that best laborede · best was alowed,
And leders for here laborynge · ouere al the lordes goodes.

He bi-nom him his npnam · for he nolde not worche,
And ȝaf hit him in haste · that hedde ten bi-fore;
And seththen he thus seide · his seruauns hit herden,
He that hath schal haue · to helpe ther neod is,
And he that nouȝt hath, nouȝt schal haue · ne no mon him helpe;
And he that hopeth forte haue · hit him beo bi-reuet.'
For Kuynde Wit wolde · that vche mon wrouhte
With techinge or with tilynge · or trauaylynge of hondes,
Actyf lyf or contemplatyf · Crist wolde hit alse.
For so seith the sauter · in psalm of *beati omnes*,

And binam hym his mnam · for he ne wolde worche,
And ȝaf that mnam to hym · that ten mnames hadde,
And with that he seyde · that holicherche it herde,
'He that hath shal haue · and helpe there it nedeth,
And he that nouȝt hath, shal nouȝt haue · and no man hym helpe;
And that he weneth wel to haue · I wil it hym bireue.'
Kynde witt wolde · that eche a wyght wrouȝte
Or in dykynge or in deluynge · or trauaillynge in preyeres,
Contemplatyf lyf or actyf lyf · Cryst wolde men wrouȝte.
The sauter seyth in the psalme · of *beati omnes*,
The freke that fedeth hym-self · with his feythful laboure,
He is blessed by the boke · in body and in soule:
Labores manuum tuarum, etc.'

'ȝet I prey ȝow,' quod Pieres · '*par charite*, and ȝe kunne
Eny leef of lechecraft · lere it me, my dere.
For somme of my seruauntz · and my-self bothe
Of al a wyke worche nouȝt · so owre wombe aketh.'
'I wote wel,' quod Hunger · 'what sykenesse ȝow eyleth,
ȝe han maunged ouer-moche · and that maketh ȝow grone.
Ac I hote the,' quod Hunger · 'as thow thyne hele wilnest,
That thow drynke no day · ar thow dyne somwhat.

A. 237. *The Latin is from* TH; V *om.* B. 243. hym WCRO; L *om.*

Labores manuum tuarum quia manducabis, etc.

He that get his fode her · with trauaylinge in treuthe,
God ȝiueth him his blessyng · that his lyflode so swynketh.'
'Yit I preye the,' quod Pers · 'par charite, ȝif thou conne
Eny lyf of leche-craft · lere hit me, my deore.
For summe of my seruauns · beoth seke other-while,
Of alle the wike heo worcheth not · so heor wombe aketh.'
'I wot wel,' quod Hungur · 'what seknesse hem eileth,
Thei han i-maunget ouur muche · that maketh hem grone ofte.
Ac ich hote the,' quod Hungur · 'and thou thin hele wylne,
That thou drynke no dai · til thou haue dynet sumwhat;

Ac he that was a wrecche · and wolde nat trauayle,
The lord, for hus lacchesse · and hus luther sleuthe,
By-nom hym al that he hadde · and ȝaf hit to hus felawe
That leely hadde labored; · and thenne the lord seide,
'He that hath shal haue · and helpe ther hym lyketh;
And he that nauht haueth · he shal nauht haue,
And no man ȝut helpe hym; · and that he weneth haue,
Ich wolle hit hym by-reue · for hus rechelesnesse.'
Lo! what the sauter seith · to swynkers with handes,
'Yblessed be alle tho · that here by-lyue byswynken
Thorw eny leel labour · as thorgh lymes and handes;'

Labores manuum tuarum quia manducabis; beatus es, et bene tibi erit: et cetera.

These aren euydences,' quath Hunger · 'for hem that wolle nat swynken,
That here lyflode be lene · and lytel worth here clothes.'
'By Cryst,' quath Peers the plouhman tho · 'these prouerbes wolle ich shewe
To beggers, and to boyes · that loth ben to worche.
Ac ȝut ich praye ȝow,' quath Peers · 'pur charity, syre Hunger,
ȝyf ȝe can other knowe · eny kynne thynge of fysyk?
For some of my seruauns · and my-selue bothe,
Of alle a woke worchen nat · so oure wombe groneth.'
'Ich wot wel,' quath Hunger · 'what syknesse ȝow aileth;
ȝe haue manged ouere muche · that maketh ȝow be syke.

C. 261. here IG; he (*wrongly*) P. byswynken EMG; swynken P. 262. *beatus—et cetera* is in S only. 263, 265. Theese P.

Ete not, ich hote the · til hunger the take,
And sende the sum of his sauce · to sauer the the betere;
Keep sum til soper tyme · and sit thou not to longe,
A-rys vp ar appetyt · habbe i-ȝeten his fulle.
Let not sir Surfet · sitten at thi bord;
Loue him not, for he is a lechour · and likerous of tonge,
And aftur mony metes · his mawe is a-longet.
And ȝif thou diȝete the thus · I dar legge bothe myn eres,

Ete nouȝte, I hote the · ar hunger the take,
And sende the of his sauce · to sauoure with thi lippes;
And kepe some tyl soper-tyme · and sitte nouȝt to longe,
Arise vp ar appetit · haue eten his fulle.
Lat nouȝt sire Surfait · sitten at thi borde;
Leue him nouȝt, for he is lecherous · and likerous of tonge,
And after many manere metes · his maw is afyngred.

And ȝif thow diete the thus · I dar legge myne eres,
That Phisik shal his furred hodes · for his fode selle,
And his cloke of Calabre · with alle the knappes of golde,
And be fayne, bi my feith · his phisik to lete,
And lerne to laboure with londe · for lyflode is swete;
For morthereres aren mony leches · lorde hem amende!
Thei do men deye thorw here drynkes · ar destinē it wolde.'
'By seynt Poule,' quod Pieres · 'thise aren profitable wordis!
Wende now, Hunger, whan thow wolt · that wel be thow euere
For this is a louely lessoun · lorde it the for-ȝelde!'

A. 250. sit TU; faste VH. 256. foode THU; lyflode V. **C.** 274. the IMG; P *om.* 276. *This line is from* MIG; P *om.* 286. wit P. 295. to IM; P *om.* 300. wenne P.

That Fisyk schal his forred hod · for his foode sulle,
And eke his cloke of Calabre · with knappes of gold,
And beo fayn, be my feith · his fisyk to lete,
And leorne to labre with lond · leste lyflode faile;
Ther beoth mo lyȝers then leches · vr lord hem amende!
Thei don men dyȝen thoruȝ heor drinke · er destenye wolde.'
'Bi seint Poul!' quod Pers · 'theos beoth prophitable wordes!
This is a loueli lesson · vr lord hit the for-ȝelde!
Wend nou whon thi wille is · wel the beo for euere!'

Ac eet nat, ich hote · or hunger the take,
And sende the of hus sauce · to sauerie with thi lippes.
And kep som til soper-tyme · and sitte nauht to longe
At noon, ne at no time; · and nameliche at soper
Let nat syre Sorfait · sitten at thy borde,
And loke thow drynke no day · er thou dyne som-what.
Thenk that *Dives* for hus delicat lyf · to the deuel wente,
And Lazar, the lene beggere · that longed after cromes—
And ȝut had he hem nat · for ich Hunger culde hym—
And sitthe ich sauh hym sitte · as he a syre were,
At alle manere ese · in Abrahammes lappe.
And yf thow be of power · Peers, ich the rede,
Alle that greden at thy gate · for godes loue, after fode,
Parte with hem of thy payn · of potage other of souel,
Lene hem som of thy loof · thauh thou the lasse chewe.
And thauh lyers and lacchedrawers · and lolleres knocke,
Let hem abyde tyl the bord be drawe · ac bere hem none cromes,
Til alle thyn nedy neihebores · haue none ymaked.
And yf thow dyght the thus · ich dar legge myn eres,
That Fysyk shal hus forrede hodes · for hus fode sulle,
And hus cloke of Calabre · for hus comunes legge,
And be fayn, by my faith · his fysyk to lete,
And lerne to labore with londe · leste lyflode hym faile.
Ther aren meny luthere leches · and leele leches fewe,
Thei don men deye thorgh here drynkes · er destyne hit wolde.'
'By seynt Paul,' quath Peers tho · 'thou poyntest neih the treuthe,
And leelly seist, as ich leue · lord the for-ȝelde!
Wend now whenne thou wolt · and wel be thow euere,
For thow hast wel ywroke me · and also wel ytauht me.'

'I beo-hote the,' quod Hungur · 'heonnes nul I wende
Er I haue i-dynet bi this day · and i-dronke bothe.'
'I haue no peny,' quod Pers · 'poletes to bugge,
Nouther gees ne grys · bote twey grene cheeses,
And a fewe cruddes and craym · and a therf cake,
And a lof of benes and bren · i-bake for my children.
And I sigge, bi my soule · I haue no salt bacon,
Ne no cokeneyes, bi Crist · colopus to maken.
Bot I haue porettes and percyl · and moni colplontes,
And eke a cou, and a calf · and a cart-mare
To drawe a-feld my donge · whil the drouhthe lasteth.
Bi this lyflode I mot lyuen · til Lammasse tyme;
Bi that, ich hope forte haue · heruest in my croft;
Thenne may I dihte thi dyner · as the deore lyketh.'

'By-hote god,' quod Hunger · 'hennes ne wil I wende,
Til I haue dyned bi this day · and ydronke bothe.'
'I haue no peny,' quod Peres · 'poletes forto bigge,
Ne neyther gees ne grys · but two grene cheses,
A fewe cruddes and creem · and an hauer cake,
And two loues of benes and bran · y-bake for my fauntis.
And ȝet I sey, by my soule · I haue no salt bacoun,
Ne no kokeney, bi Cryst · coloppes forto maken.
Ac I haue percil and porettes · and many kole-plantes,
And eke a cow and a kalf · and a cart-mare
To drawe a-felde my donge · the while the drought lasteth.
And bi this lyflode we mot lyue · til Lammasse tyme;
And bi that, I hope to haue · heruest in my croft;
And thanne may I diȝte thi dyner · as me dere liketh.'
Alle the pore peple tho · pesecoddes fetten,
Benes and baken apples · thei brouȝte in her lappes,
Chibolles and cheruelles · and ripe chiries manye,
And profred Peres this present · to plese with hunger.
Al Hunger eet in hast · and axed after more.
Thanne pore folke for fere · fedde Hunger ȝerne
With grene poret and pesen · to poysoun Hunger thei thouȝte.
By that it neighed nere heruest · newe corne cam to chepynge;
Thanne was folke fayne · and fedde Hunger with the best,
With good ale, as Glotoun tauȝte · and gerte Hunger go slepe.
And tho wolde Wastour nouȝt werche · but wandren aboute,

Al the pore peple · pese-coddes fetten,
Bake benes in bred · thei brouhten in heor lappes,
Chibolles, cheef mete · and ripe chiries monye,
And proferde Pers this present · to plese with hungur.
Honger eet this in haste · and asked aftur more.
Thenne this folk for fere · fetten him monye
Poretes, and peosen · for thei him plese wolden;
From that tyme that thulke weore eten · take he schulde his leue
Til hit to heruest hiȝede · that newe corn com to chepynge.
Thenne was that folk fayn · and fedde Hunger ȝeorne
With good ale, and glotonye · and gart him to slepe.
And tho nolde the wastor worche · but wandren aboute,

'Ich by-hote the,' quath Hunger · 'that hennes nel ich wende
Er ich haue y-dyned by thys day · and y-dronke bothe!'
'Ich haue no peny,' quath Peers · 'polettes for to bigge,
Nother goos nother grys · bote two grene cheses,
A fewe croddes and creyme · and a cake of otes,
And bred for my barnes · of benes and of peses.
And ȝut ich sey, by my saule · ich haue no salt bacon;
Nouht a cokeney, by Cryst · colhoppes to make.
Ac ich haue porett-plontes · perselye and scalones,
Chiboles and chiruylles · and chiries sam-rede,
And a cow with a calf · and a cart-mare,
To drawe a-feld my donge · the whyle drouth lasteth.
By this lyflode we mote lyue · tyl Lammasse tyme;
And by that, ich hope to haue · heruest in my crofte;
Thenne may I dyghte thy dyner · as me dere lyketh.'
Alle the poure puple tho · peescoddes fetten;
Benes and baken apples · thei brouhte in here lappes,
And profrede Peers this present · to plese ther-with Hunger.
Hunger eet al in haste · and askede after more;
Poure folke for fere tho · fedde Hunger ȝerne
With creym and with croddes · with carses and other herbes.
By that yt neihed heruest · and newe corn com to chepyng,
Thenne was this folke feyn · and fedde Hunger deynteuosliche,
And Gloton tho with good ale · gerte Hunger to slepe.
Tho wolde Wastour nat worche · bote wandrede aboute,

C. 311. chirueylles P. 313. wyle P. 323. chipynge P.

Ne no beggere eten bred · that benes inne coome,
Bote coket and cler-matin · an of clene whete;
Ne non halfpeny ale · in none wyse drynke,
Bote of the beste and the brouneste · that brewesters sullen.
Laborers that haue no lond · to liuen on bote heore honden,
Deyne not to dyne a day · niht-olde wortes.
Mai no peny-ale hem paye · ne no pece of bacun,
Bote hit weore fresch flesch · or elles fisch i-friȝet,
Bothe *chaud* and *pluschaud* · for chele of heore mawe.
Bote he beo heihliche i-huret · elles wol he chide,

Ne no begger ete bred · that benes inne were,
But of coket or clerematyn · or elles of clene whete;
Ne none halpeny ale · in none wise drynke,
But of the best and of the brounest · that in borghe is to selle.
Laboreres that haue no lande · to lyue on but her handes,
Deyned nouȝt to dyne a-day · nyȝt-olde wortes.
May no peny-ale hem paye · ne no pece of bakoun,
But if it be fresch flesch other fische · fryed other bake,
And that *chaude* or *plus chaud* · for chillyng of her mawe.
And but-if he be heighlich huyred · ellis wil he chyde,
And that he was werkman wrouȝt · waille the tyme,
Aȝeines Catones conseille · comseth he to Iangle:—
Paupertatis onus pacienter ferre memento.
He greueth hym aȝeines god · and gruccheth aȝeines resoun,
And thanne curseth he the kynge · and al his conseille after,
Suche lawes to loke · laboreres to greue.
Ac whiles Hunger was her maister · there wolde none of hem chyde,
Ne stryue aȝeines his statut · so sterneliche he loked.
Ac I warne ȝow, werkemen · wynneth while ȝe mowe,
For Hunger hiderward · hasteth hym faste,
He shal awake with water · wastoures to chaste.
Ar fyue ȝere be fulfilled · suche famyn shal aryse,
Thorwgh flodes and thourgh foule wederes · frutes shul faille,
And so sayde Saturne · and sent ȝow to warne:

A. 305. statutes UH; statues V. 311. Saturne HU; Saturnes V.

That he was werkmon i-wrouȝt · warie the tyme,
And corse ȝerne the kyng · and al his counseil aftur,
Suche lawes to loke · laborers to chaste.
Ac while Hunger was mayster heer · wolde ther non chyde,
Ne striue aȝeyn the statutes · so steorneliche he lokede.
I warne ȝou, alle werk-men · winneth while ȝe mowe,
Hunger hiderward aȝeyn · hiȝeth him ȝeorne.
He wole a-wake thorw watur · the wastours alle;
Er fyue ȝer ben folfult · such famyn schal a-ryse,
Thorw flodes and foul weder · fruites schul fayle;
And so seith Saturne · and sent vs to warne.

Nother beggere eete bred · that benes were ynne,
Bote clerematyn and coket · and of clene whete;
Thei wolde non halpeny ale · in none wyse drynke,
Bote of the best and brounest · that brewesters sellen.
Laboreres that han no londe · to lyuen on bote here handes
Deyned noght to dyne a-day · nyght-olde wortes.
May no peny-ale hem paye · ne a pece of bacon,
Bote hit be freesch fleesch other fysch · fried other ybake,
And that *chaud* and *pluschaud* · for chillyng of here mawe.
Bote he be heyliche yhyred · elles wol he chide,
That he was a werkman ywroght · waryen the tyme;
Corteis Catones consail · comseth he by-grucche,
Paupertatis onus · pacienter ferre memento.

And thenne he corseth the kyng · and alle the kynges Iustices,
Suche lawes to lere · laborers to greue.
Ac while Hunger was here mayster · wolde non chide,

Ne stryue a-ȝens the statute · he lokede so sturne.
Ac ich warne ȝow werkmen · wynne whyle ȝe mowe,
For Hunger hyderwardes · hyeth hym faste;
He shal awake thorw water · wasters to chaste.
Ar fewe ȝeres be fulfilled · famyne shal aryse,

And so seith *Saturnus* · and sent ȝow to warne.

B. 323. hideward L. 325. ȝere R; ȝeer O; L *om.* C. 332. noght I; PEMG *om.* 342. wile P. 344. wyle P. 348. An P.

[*Not in* **A**-*text.*]

Whan ȝe se the sonne amys · and two monkes hedes,
And a mayde haue the maistrie · and multiplie bi eight,
Thanne shal Deth withdrawe · and Derthe be iustice,
And Dawe the dyker · deye for hunger,
But if god of his goodnesse · graunt vs a trewe.

[*Not in* **A**-*text.*]

Thorwe flodes and foule wederes · frutes shullen faile,
Pruyde and pestilences · shal muche puple fecche.
Thre shupes and a shaft · with an vm. folwyng,
Shal brynge bane and bataile · on bothe half the mone.
And thanne shal deth with-drawe · and derthe be Iustice,
And Dawe the deluere · deye for defaute,
Bote god of hus goodnesse · graunte ous a trewe.

Hic explicit passus nonus.

C. 350. pestelences P. 351. viij (*for* vm) I.

PASSUS VIII.

Passus octauus de visione, vt prius.

TREUTHE herde telle her-of · and to Pers sende,
To taken his teeme · and tilyen the eorthe;
And purchasede him a pardoun · *a pena et a culpa*
For him, and for his heires · euer-more aftur.
And bad holden hem at hom · and heren heore leyȝes,
And al that euere hulpen him · to heren or to sowen,
Or eny maner mester · that mihte Pers helpen,

PASSUS VII.

Passus vij. de visione, vt supra.

TREUTHE herde telle her-of · and to Peres he sent,
To taken his teme · and tulyen the erthe,
And purchaced hym a pardoun · *a pena et a culpa*
For hym, and for his heires · for euermore after.
And bad hym holde hym at home · and eryen his leyes,
And alle that halpe hym to erie · to sette or to sowe,
Or any other myster · that myȝte Pieres auaille,
Pardoun with Pieres plowman · treuthe hath ygraunted.
Kynges and knyȝtes · that kepen holycherche,
And ryȝtfullych in reumes · reulen the peple,
Han pardoun thourgh purgatorie · to passe ful lyȝtly,
With patriarkes and prophetes · in paradise to be felawes.
Bisshopes yblessed · ȝif thei ben as thei shulden,
Legistres of bothe the lawes · the lewed there-with to preche,
And in as moche as thei mowe · amende alle synful,
Aren peres with the apostles · this pardoun Piers sheweth,
And at the day of dome · atte heigh deyse to sytte.

B. 16. this WCO; thus LR. **C.** 5. hym IG; P *om.* 7. myster MEG; meester P. 9. kirke I; churche PEG. 10. ryghtfulleche P. 18. custymes P.

Part in that pardoun · the pope hath i-graunted.
Kynges and knihtes · that kepen holi churche,
And rihtfuliche rulen · the reame and the peple,
Han pardoun thorw purgatorie · to passen ful sone,
With patriarkes in paradys · to pleyen ther-aftur.
Busschops that blessen · and bothe the lawes cunnen,
Loketh on that on lawe · and lereth men that other,
And bereth hem bothe on heore bac · as heore baner scheweth,
And precheth heore persouns · the peril of sunne,
Hou heore schabbede schep · schal heore wolle saue,
Han pardoun with the apostles · whon thei passen hennes,
And atte day of dom · with hem on deis setten.

PASSUS X.

Incipit passus decimus.

TREUTHE herde telle here-of · and to Peers sente
To take hus teeme · and tulye the erthe;
And purchased hym a pardon · *á pena et á culpa,*
For hym and for hus heyres · for euere to be asoiled;
And bad hym halde hym at home · and erye hus leyes,
And alle that hulpe hym to erye · to setten other to sawe,
Other eny manere myster · that myght Peers a-vayle,
Pardon with Peers plouhman · perpetual he graunteth.
Kynges and knyghtes · that holy kirke defenden,
And ryghtfulliche in reames · ruelen the comune,
Han pardon thorw purgatorie · to passy ful lyghtliche,
With patriarkes and prophetes · in paradyse to sitte.
Bisshopes yblessed · if thei ben as thei sholde,
Leel and ful of loue · and no lord dreden,
Merciable to meek · and mylde to the goode,
And bytynge on badde men · bote yf thei wolde amende,
And dredeth nat for no deth · to distruye, by here powere,
Lecherie a-mong lordes · and hure luther customes,
And sitthen lyue as thei lereth men · oure lord treuthe hem graunteth
To be peeres to a-posteles · alle puple to ruele,
And deme with hem at domes day · bothe quik and ded.

Marchauns in this margin · hedden mony ȝeres,
Bote non *a pena et a culpa* · the pope nolde hem graunte,
For thei holdeth not heore haly-day · as holy churche techeth,
And for thei sworen bi heore soule · —'so god hem moste helpe!'—
Aȝeyn heore clene concience · heore catel to sulle.
Bote vndur his secre seal · Treuthe sende a lettre,
And bad hem bugge boldely · what hem best lykede,
And seththen sullen hit a-ȝeyn · and saue the wynnynge,
And make *meson-deux* ther-with · meseyse to helpe,
And wikkede wones · wihtly to amende;
Beete brugges a-boute · that to-broke were,
Marie maydens · or maken hem nonnes;
Pore widewes that wolde beo · none wyues aftur,

Marchauntz in the margyne · hadden many ȝeres,
Ac none *a pena et a culpa* · the pope nolde hem graunte,
For thei holde nouȝt her halidayes · as holicherche techeth,
And for thei swere by her soule · and 'so god moste hem helpe,'
Aȝein clene conscience · her catel to selle.
Ac vnder his secret seel · Treuthe sent hem a lettre,
That they shulde bugge boldely · that hem best liked,
And sithenes selle it aȝein · and saue the wynnynge,
And amende *mesondieux* there-myde · and myseyse folke helpe,
And wikked wayes · wiȝtlich hem amende;
And do bote to brugges · that to-broke were,
Marien maydenes · or maken hem nonnes;
Pore peple and prisounes · fynden hem here fode,
And sette scoleres to scole · or to somme other craftes;
Releue religioun · and renten hem bettere;—
'And I shal sende ȝow my-selue · seynt Michel myn archangel,
That no deuel shal ȝow dere · ne fere ȝow in ȝowre deyinge,
And witen ȝow fro wanhope · if ȝe wil thus worche,
And sende ȝowre sowles in safte · to my seyntes in ioye.'
Thanne were marchauntz mery · many wepten for ioye,
And preyseden Pieres the plowman · that purchaced this bulle.
Men of lawe lest pardoun hadde · that pleteden for mede,

A. 20. Marchaus (*sic*) V. 28. *deux* T; *dieux* H; *deu* V. 45. loth H;

Fynde suche heore foode · for godes loue of heuene;
Sette scolers to scole · or to sum other craft,
Rule religion · and rente hem betere;
'And I schal sende ow my-self · seint Mihel myn aungel,
That no deuel schal ȝou dere · whon ȝe dye schulle,
That I ne schal sende ȝor soules · saaf in-to heuene,
And bi-foren the face of my fader · fourmen or seetes.
Vsure and auarice · and othes I defende,
That no gile go with ou · bote the grace of treuthe.'
Thenne were marchaundes murie · thei wopen for ioye,
And ȝeeuen Wille for his writynge · wollene clothes;
For he copiede thus heore cause · thei couden him gret thonk.
Men of lawe hedden lest · for heo beoth loth

Marchans in the margine · hadden menye ȝeres,
Ac *á pena et á culpa* · Treuthe nolde hem graunte;
For thei holden nat here halydaies · as holychurche techeth,
And for thei swere by here saule · and 'so god me mote helpe!'
Aȝens clene conscience · for couetyse of wynnynge.
Ac vnder his secre seel · Treuthe sente hem a lettere,
And bad hem bygge baldly · what hem best lykede,
And sitthen sellen hit a-ȝeyn · and saue the wynnynges,
Amenden *meson-dieux* ther-with · and myseyse men fynde,
And wikkede weyes · with here good amende,
And brygges to-broke · by the heye weyes
Amende in som manere wise · and maydenes helpen;
Poure puple bedredene · and prisones in stockes,
Fynde hem for godes loue · and fauntekynes to scole;
Releue religion · and renten hem bettere;
'And ich shal sende ȝow my-selue · seynt Michel myn angel,
That no deuel shal ȝow dere · ne despeir in ȝoure deyinge,
And sende ȝoure soules · ther ich my-self dwelle,
And there a-byde body and soule · in blisse for euere.'
Tho were merchauns murye · somme wepte for ioye,
And preyde for Peers plouhman · that purchasede hem this bulle.
Alle the puple hadde pardon ynow · that parfytliche lyueden;
Men of lawe hadde lest · that loth were to plede,

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lettered alle V. **B.** 25. wynnyge L. **C.** 27, 28. hym (*for* hem) P. 33. maydones P. 38. deyenge P. 40. þe (*for* there) P.

To mote for mene men · but ȝif thei hadde money;
So seith the sauter · and Sapience bothe,
Super innocentes munera non accipiunt. A regibus et principibus erit merces eorum.
Of princes and prelatus · heor pencion schulde aryse,
And of the pore peple · no peneworth to take.
Ac he that spendeth his speche · and speketh for the pore
That is innocent and neodi · and no mon hath apeyret,
Cumforteth him in his caas · coueiteth not his goodes,
Bote for vr lordes loue · lawe for him scheweth,
Schal no deuel at his deth-day · deren him worth a myte,

For the sauter saueth hem nouȝte · such as taketh ȝiftes,
And namelich of innocentz · that none yuel ne kunneth;
Super innocentem munera non accipies.
Pledoures shulde peynen hem · to plede for such, an helpe,
Princes and prelates · shulde paye for her trauaille;
A regibus et pryncipibus erit merces eorum.
Ac many a Iustice an Iuroure · wolde for Iohan do more,
Than *pro dei pietate* · leue thow none other!
Ac he that spendeth his speche · and speketh for the pore
That is innocent and nedy · and no man appeireth,
Conforteth hym in that cas · with-oute coueytise of ȝiftes,
And scheweth lawe for owre lordes loue · as he it hath lerned,
Shal no deuel at his ded-day · deren hym a myȝte,
That he ne worth sauf and his sowle · the sauter bereth witnesse;
Domine, quis habitabit in tabernaculo tuo, &c.
Ac to bugge water, ne wynde · ne witte, ne fyre the fierthe,
Thise foure the fader of heuene · made to this folde in comune;
Thise ben treuthes tresores · trewe folke to helpe,
That neuere shal wax ne wanye · with-oute god hym-selue.
Whan thei drawen on to deye · and indulgences wolde haue,
Her pardoun is ful petit · at her partyng hennes,
That any mede of mene men · for her motyng taketh.
ȝe legistres and lawyeres · holdeth this for treuthe,
That, ȝif that I lye · Mathew is to blame,
For he bad me make ȝow this · and this prouerbe me tolde,
Quodcumque vultis vt faciant vobis homines, facite eis.

That he ne worth siker saaf · and so seith the psauter,
Qui facit hec, non mouebitur in eternum.
Ac to bugge water, ne wynt · ne wit, (is the thridde),
Nolde neuer holy writ · god wot the sothe!
Theos threo for thralles · beo thriuen a-mong vs alle,
To waxen or to wonien · whether god lyketh,
His pardoun in purgatorie · is petit, I trouwe,
That eny meede of mene men · for motynge receyueth.
3e legistres and lawyers · 3e witen wher I ly3e;
Seththe 3e seon that hit is so · serueth to the beste.

Bote thei *pre manibus* were payed · for pledyng atte barre.

Ac he that speneth hus speche · and speketh for the poure
That innocent and nedy is · and no man harmē wolde,
And conforteth suche in eny cas · and coueyteth nat here 3iftes,
And for the loue of oure lorde · lawe for hem declareth,
Shal haue grace of god ynow · and a gret ioye after.
Beth ywar, 3e wise men · and witty of the lawe;

For whenne 3e draweth to the deth · and indulgence wolde haue,
Hus pardon is ful petit · at hus partynge hennes,
That mede of mene men · for here motynge taketh.
For hit is symonye, to sulle · that send is of grace;
That is, witt and water · wynd, and fuyr the furthe,
These foure sholden be fre · to alle folk that hit nedeth.

A. 46. *This line is in* H *only*. 47. V omits all after *Regibus*. 48. princes THU; parisches V. 55. *The Latin is in* H *only*. 56. (*2nd*) ne T; or H; V *om*. C. 47. nedy IMEG; nudy P. 48. 3eftes P. 51. wise men IMEG; wismen P. 52. wenne P. 57. nedeþ IME; neededе P.

Libbinde laborers · that libben bi heore hondes,
That treuliche taken · and treuliche tithen,
And liuen in loue and in lawe · for heore lowe hertes,
Hedde the same absolucion · that sent was to Pers.

Alle lybbyng laboreres · that lyuen with her hondes,
That trewlich taken · and trewlich wynnen,
And lyuen in loue and in lawe · for her lowe hertis,
Haueth the same absolucioun · that sent was to Peres.
Beggeres ne bidderes · ne beth nouȝte in the bulle,
But if the suggestioun be soth · that shapeth hem to begge.
For he that beggeth or bit · but if he haue nede,
He is fals with the fende · and defraudeth the nedy,
And also he bigileth the gyuere · ageines his wil.
For if he wist he were nouȝte nedy · he wolde ȝiue that an-other,
That were more nedy than he · so the nediest shuld be hulpe.
Catoun kenneth men thus · and the clerke of the stories,
Cui des, videto · is Catounes techynge,
And in the stories he techeth · to bistowe thyn almes;
Sit elemosina tua in manu tua, donec studes cui des.
Ac Gregori was a gode man · and bad vs gyuen alle
That asketh, for his loue · that vs alle leneth:—
Non eligas cui miserearis, ne forte pretereas illum qui meretur accipere. Quia incertum est pro quo Deo magis placeas.
For wite ȝe neuere who is worthi · ac god wote who hath nede,
In hym that taketh is the treccherye · if any tresoun wawe;
For he that ȝiueth, ȝeldeth · and ȝarketh hym to reste,
And he that biddeth, borweth · and bryngeth hym-self in dette.
For beggeres borwen euermo · and her borghe is god almyȝti,
To ȝelden hem that ȝiueth hem · and ȝet vsure more:
Quare non dedisti peccuniam meam ad mensam, vt ego veniens cum vsuris exegissem illam?
For-thi biddeth nouȝt, ȝe beggeres · but if ȝe haue gret nede;
For who-so hath to buggen hym bred · the boke bereth witnesse,
He hath ynough that hath bred ynough · though he haue nouȝt elles:
Satis diues est, qui non indiget pane.

Bidders and beggers · beoth not in the bulle,
Bote the suggestion be soth · that schapeth hem to begge.
For he that beggeth or biddeth · bote he habbe neode,
He is fals with the fend · and defraudeth the neodi,
Aud eke gyleth the ȝiuere · al aȝeyn his wille.

Alle lybbynge laborours · · that lyuėn with here handes
Leelyche and lawefulliche · oure lord treuthe hem graunteth
Pardon perpetuel · ryght as Peers Plouhman.
Beggers and bydders · beth nat in that bulle
Bote the suggestion be soth · that shapeth hem to begge.
For he that beggeth other byddeth · bote yf he haue nede,
He ys fals and faitour · and defraudeth the nedy,
And also gyleth hym that gyueth · and taketh ageyns hus wyl.
For he that gyueth for godes loue · wolde nat gyue, hus thankus,
Bote ther he wyste hit were · wel gret neede to gyuen,
And most meritorie to men · that he ȝeueth for.
Caton a-cordeth ther-with · *cui des uideto ;*

Wot no man, as ich wene · who is worthy to haue.

B. 75. L omits the former *tua.* 77. *Deo* W; *deum* L. 83. *exigissem* CB; *exigerem* L. The MSS. omit *illam.* **C.** 58. laberours P. 59. lawefulleche P. 61. þat IMEG; þe P. 62. sugestion P. shappeþ P. 63. (*2nd*) he MI; þei P. 64. nedy IMEG; neede P. 68. mest P. fore P.

[*Not in* **A**-*text or* **B**-*text.*]

The most needy aren oure neighebores · and we nyme good hede,
As prisones in puttes · and poure folke in cotes,
Charged with children · and chef lordes rente,
That thei with spynnynge may spare · spenen hit in hous-hyre,
Bothe in mylk and in mele · to make with· papelotes,
To a-glotye with here gurles · that greden after fode.
Al-so hem-selue · suffren muche hunger,
And wo in winter-tyme · with wakynge a nyghtes
To ryse to the ruel · to rocke the cradel,
Bothe to karde and to kembe · to clouten and to wasche,
To rubbe and to rely · russhes to pilie,
That reuthe is to rede · othere in ryme shewe
The wo of these women · that wonyeth in cotes;
And of meny other men · that muche wo suffren,
Bothe a-fyngrede and a-furst · to turne the fayre outwarde,
And beth abasshed for to begge · and wolle nat be aknowe
What hem needeth at here neihebores · at non and at euen.
This ich wot witerly · as the worlde techeth,
What other by-houeth · that hath meny children,
And hath no catel bote hus crafte · to clothy hem and to fede,
And fele to fonge ther-to · and fewe pans taketh.
Ther is payn and peny-ale · as for a pytaunce y-take,
Colde flessh and cold fyssh · for veneson ybake;
Frydayes and fastyng-dayes · a ferthyng-worth of muscles
Were a feste for suche folke · other so fele cockes.
These were almes, to helpe · that han suche charges,
And to comfortie such cotyers · and crokede men and blynde.
Ac beggers with bagges · the whiche brewhouses ben here churches,
Bote thei be blynde other broke · other elles be syke,
Thauh he falle for defaute · that faiteth for hus lyf-lode,
Reccheth neuere, ȝe ryche · thauh suche lorelles steruen.
For alle that han here hele · and here eyen syghte,
And lymes to laborye with · and lolleres lyf vsen,
Lyuen a-ȝens godes lawe · and lore of holy churche.
And ȝut arn ther other beggers · in hele, as hit semeth,

C. 74. wiþ MIG; P *om.* spenen E; spene IG; spynen P. 83. of IG; þat P. þeese P. 86. aknowe MEG; yknowe P. 87. att P (*1st time*). 94. a IMEG; P *om.* 95. a folke P; *but* IMEG *omit* a. 116. wyght G;

[*Not in* **A**-*text or* **B**-*text*; *see* p. 234.]

Ac hem wanteth here witt · men and women bothe,
The whiche aren lunatik lollers · and leperes a-boute,
And mad as the mone sitt · more other lasse.
Thei caren for no cold · ne counteth of no hete,
And arn meuynge after the mone · moneyles thei walke,
With a good wil, witlees · meny wyde contreys,
Ryght as Peter dude and Paul · saue that thei preche nat,
Ne myracles maken; · ac meny tymes hem happeth
To prophecien of the puple · pleyinge, as hit were,
And to oure sight, as hit semeth · suththe God hath the myghte
To ȝeuen eche a wyght wit · welthe, and his hele,
And suffreth suche so gon · hit semeth, to myn inwitt,
Hit arn as hus aposteles, suche puple · other as his priuye disciples.
For he sente hem forth seluerles · in a somer garnement,
With-oute bred and bagge · as the bok telleth,
Quando misi uos sine pane et pera;
Barfot and bredles · beggeth thei of no man.
And thauh he mete with the meyre · amyddes the strete,
He reuerenceth hym ryght nouht · no rather than another;
Neminem salutaueritis per uiam.
Suche manere of men · Matheu ous techeth,
We sholde haue hem to house · and help hem when thei come;
Et egenos uagosque induc in domum tuam.
For hit aren murye-mouthede men · mynstrales of heuene,
And godes boyes, bordiours · as the bok telleth,
Si quis uidetur sapiens, fiet stultus ut sit sapiens.
And alle manere mynstrales · men wot wel the sothe,
To vnder-fonge hem faire · by-falleth for the ryche,
For the lordes loue and ladies · that thei with lengen.
Men suffren al that suche seyn · and in solas taken,
And ȝut more to suche men · doth er thei passe,
Gyuen hem gyftes and gold · for grete lordes sake.
Ryght so, ȝe riche · rather ȝe sholde, for sothe,
Welcomen and worsshepen · and with ȝoure goode helpen
Godes mynstrales and hus messagers · and hus murye bordiours;

whiȝt E; whit P. 122. meyere P. amyddes I; in-mydest P. 123. *salutaueritis* EMG; *salutaueris* PI. 129. by-falleþ GE; by-falle P 135. Wolcomen P. 136. bordiours EI; burdiers (*see* l. 127).

Thei libben not in loue · ne no lawe holden;
Thei weddeth no wommon · that thei with deleth;

Late vsage be ȝowre solace · of seyntes lyues redynge,
The boke banneth beggarie · and blameth hem in this manere: 88
Iunior fui, etenim senui; et non vidi iustum derelictum,
nec semen eius querens panem.

For ȝe lyue in no loue · ne no lawe holde;
Many of ȝow ne wedde nouȝt · the wommen that ȝe with delen,
But as wilde bestis with wehe · worthen vppe and worchen,
And bryngeth forth barnes · that bastardes men calleth. 92

A. 73. not—ne UT; in no lawe · that V. 75. wilde—with TH; beestes

Bote as wilde beestes, with wo · worcheth to-gedere,
And bringeth forth barnes · that bastardes beon holden. 76

The whiche arn lunatik lollares · and leperes a-boute,
For vnder godes secre seel · here synnes ben ykeuered.
For thei bereth no bagges · ne none botels vnder clokes,
The whiche is lollaren lyf · and lewede eremytes, 140
That loken ful louheliche · to lacchen mennes almesse,
In hope to sitten at euen · by the hote coles,
Vnlouke hus legges abrod · other lygge at hus ese,
Reste hym, and roste hym · and his ryg turne, 144
Drynke drue and deepe · and drawe hym thanne to bedde;
And when hym lyketh and lust · hus leue ys to aryse;
When he ys rysen, rometh out · and ryght wel aspieth
Whar he may rathest haue a repast · other a rounde of bacon,
Suluer other sode mete · and som tyme bothe, 149
A loof other half a loof · other a lompe of chese;
And carieth it hom to hus cote · and cast him to lyue
In ydelnesse and in ese · and by others trauayle. 152
And what frek of thys folde · fisketh thus a-boute,
With a bagge at hus bak · a begeneldes wyse,
And can som manere craft · in cas he wolde hit vse,
Thorgh whiche craft he couthe · come to bred and to ale, 156
And ouer-more to an hater · to helye with hus bones,
And lyueth lyk a lollere · godes lawe hym dampneth.
'Lolleres lyuyng in sleuthe · and ouer-londe strykers
Beeth nat in this bulle,' quath Peers · 'til thei ben amendid,
Nother beggers that beggen · bote yf thei haue neede. 161
The bok blameth alle beggerye · and banneth in this manere,

Iunior fui, etenim senui, non uidi iustum derelictum, nec semen eius querens panem; et alibi: Infirmata est uirtus mea in paupertate.

Hit needeth nauht nouthe · a-non for to preche,
And lere these lewede men · what thys Latyn meneth, 164
For hit blameth alle beggerie · be ȝe ful certeyn.
For thei lyue in no loue · ne no lawe thei holden;
Thei wedde non womon · that thei with delen,
Bringeth forth bastardes · beggers of kynde. 168

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that V. **B.** 88. *querens panem* OC; LWR *om.* **C.** 138. ykeuerede P. 159. ouere-londe P. 166. ne IMEG; P *om.*

Or his bac, or his bon · heo breketh in heore ȝouthe,
And goth, fayteth with heore fauntes · euer-more after.
Ther ben mo mis-happes amongus hem · hose taketh heede,
Then of alle othure men · that on molde wandren.
Thei that lyuen thus heore lyf · mouwe lothe the tyme,
That euere thei weore men i-wrouȝt · whon thei schul henne fare.

Or the bakke or some bone · he breketh in his ȝouthe,
And sitthe gon faiten with ȝoure fauntes · for euermore after.
There is moo mysshape peple · amonge thise beggeres,
Than of alle maner men · that on this molde walketh;
And thei that lyue thus here lyf · mowe lothe the tyme,
That euere he was man wrouȝt · whan he shal hennes fare.
Ac olde men and hore · that helplees ben of strengthe,
And women with childe · that worche ne mowe,
Blynde and bedered · and broken here membres,

That taketh this myschief mekelych · as meseles and othere,
Han as pleyne pardoun · as the plowman hym-self;
For loue of her lowe hertis · owre lorde hath hem graunted
Here penaunce and her purgatorie · here on this erthe.

A. 78. fautes V. 88. loue of THU; V *om.* B. 94. A (*for* And) L. C. 171. messhapene P. 173. ȝe me PE; *but* MIG *omit* me. 175. heelples P. 181. men IMEG; P *om.* 182. pouerte IMEG; pourte P. 183, 192, &c; þeese P. 185. pure IMFEG; poure P. 187. *Only in* IK; *the rest omit*

Bote olde men and hore · that helples beoth of strengthe,
And wymmen with childe · that worchen ne mowen,
Blynde and bedreden · and broken heore membres,
That taken meschef mekeliche · as meseles or othere,
Han as pleyn pardoun · as the plouh-mon him-seluen;
For loue of heore lowe hertes · vr lord hath hem graunted
Heore penaunce and heore purgatorie · is her vppon eorthe.

Other the bak other som bon · thei breken of here children,
And gooth afaytyng with here fauntes · for euere-more after.
Ther arn mo misshapen · a-mong suche beggers,
Than of meny other men · that on this molde walken.
Tho that lyuen thus hure lyf · leyue ȝe non othere,
Thei han no part of pardon · of preyers, ne of penaunces.
Ac olde men and hore · that helples beeth and nedy,
And wommen with childe · that worche ne mowen,
Blynde men and bedreden · and broken in here membres,
And alle poure pacientes · a-payed of godes sonde,
As mesels and mendinauntes · men yfalle in myschef,
As prisons and pilgrimes · paraunter men yrobbed,
Other by-lowe thorwe luthere men · and lost here catel after,
Other thorgh fure other thorwe flood · falle to pouerte,
That taken these meschiefes meekliche · and myldliche at herte;
For loue of here lowe hertes · oure lord hath hem graunted
Here penaunce and here purgatorie · vp-on thys pure erthe,
And pardon with Peers Plouhman · *a pena et a culpa.*
And alle holy hermites · haue schal the same;
Ac eremites that en-habiten · by the heye weyes,
And in borwes a-mong brewesters · and beggen in churches;—
Al that holy eremytes · hateden and despisede,
As rychesses and reuerences · and ryche mennes almesse,
These lolleres, lacchedraweres · lewede eremytes,
Coueyten the contrarie · as cotiers thei lybben.
For hit beth bote boyes · bollers atten ale,
Neyther of lynage, ne of lettrure; · ne lyf-holy as eremites,
That wonede whilom in wodes · with beres and lyones.

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this line. 188. en-habiten hem PM; *the rest omit* hem. 194. bollers IM; lollers (*wrongly*) PEFG. 195. Of lynguage of letture P; *but* I *inserts* Neyþer; *other* MSS. *have* Of lynage ne of lettrure. 196. whilom IMF; wyle P.

[*Not in* **A**-*text or* **B**-*text.*]

Some had lyf-lode of here lynage · and of no lyf elles;
And some lyuede by here lettrure · and labour of here hondes;
Somme hadde foreynes to frendes · that hem fode sente;
And bryddes brouhten to some bred · wherby thei lyueden.
Alle these holy eremytes · were of hye kynne,
For-soke londe and lordshep · and lykynges of the body.
Ac these eremytes that edefyen thus · by the hye weyes,
Whilom were workmen · webbes and taillours,
And carters knaues · and clerkus with-oute grace,
Helden ful hungry hous · and hadde much defaute,
Long labour and lyte wynnynge · and atte laste aspiden,
That faitours in frere clothynge · hadde fatte chekus.
For-thi lefte thei here laboure · these lewede knaues,
And clothed hem in copes · clerkus as hit were,
Other on of som ordre · othere elles a prophete;
A-ȝens the lawe he lyueth · yf Latyn be trewe;
Non licet uobis legem uoluntati, sed uoluntatem coniungere legi.
Now kyndeliche, by Crist · beth suche callyd 'lolleres,'
As by Englisch of oure eldres · of olde menne techynge.
He that lolleth is lame · other his leg out of ioynte,
Other meymed in som membre · for to meschief hit souneth.
And ryght so sothlyche · suche manere eremytes
Lollen aȝen the byleyue · and lawe of holy churche.
For holy churche hoteth · alle manere puple
Vnder obedience to bee · and buxum to the lawe.
Furst, religious, of religion · here ruele to holde,
And vnder obedience to be · by dayes and by nyghtes;
Lewede men to laborie; · and lordes to honte
In frythes and in forestes · for fox and other bestes
That in wilde wodes ben · and in wast places,
As wolues that wyryeth men · wommen and children;
And vp-on Sonedayes to cesse · godes seruyce to huyre,
Bothe matyns and messe · and, after mete, in churches

C. 204. Whilom IMGF; Wylen P. 206. Heelden P. ful IMFG; PE *om.* 212. trewe IEF; trywe P. 215. of IEFG; of þe P. 223. and MFG; PIE *om.* 226. wyrhyeþ P. 234. oþer E; or FG; P *om.*

[*Not in* **A**-*text or* **B**-*text; see* p. 240.]

To huyre here euesong · euery man ouhte.
Thus it by-longeth for lorde · for lered, and lewede,
Eche halyday to huyre · hollyche the seruice,
Vigiles and fastyngdayes · forthere-more to knowe,
And fulfille tho fastynges · bote infirmite hit made,
Pouerte other othere penaunces · as pilgrymages and trauayles.
Vnder this obedience · arn we echone;
Who-so brekyth this, be wel war · bot yf he repente,
Amende hym and mercy aske · and meekliche hym shryue,
Ich drede me, and he deye · hit worth for dedlich synne
A-counted by-fore Crist · bote conscience excuse hym.
Loke now where these lolleres · and lewede eremytes,
Yf thei breke thys obedience · that ben so fer fro churche?
Wher see we hem on Sonedays · the seruyse to huyre,
As, matyns by the morwe? · tyl masse by-gynné,
Other Sonedays at euesonge · seo we wel fewe!
Othere labory for here liflode · as the lawe wolde?
Ac at mydday meel-tyme · ich mete with hem ofte,
Comynge in a cope · as he a clerke were;
A bacheler other a beaupere · best hym by-semeth;
And for the cloth that keuereth hym · cald is he a frere,
Wassheth and wypeth · and with the furste sitteth.
Ac while he wrought in thys worlde · and wan hus mete with treuthe,
He sat atte sydbenche · and secounde table;
Cam no wyn in hus wombe · thorw the weke longe,
Nother blankett in hus bed · ne white bred by-fore hym.
The cause of al thys caitifte · cometh of meny bisshopes,
That suffren suche sottes · and othere synnes regne;
Certes, ho so thurste hit segge · *Symon quasi dormit;*
Vigilare were fairour · for thow hast gret charge.
For meny waker wolues · ben broke in-to foldes;
Thyne berkeres ben al blynde · that bryngeth forth thy lambren,
Dispergentur oues · thi dogge dar nat berke;

237. Amenden P. 240. were P. 241. fer IFG; PEM *om.* 244. wel EFG wol P. 245. here IMFEG; oure P. 247. Comynge MEFG; Conynge P. 249. he MEFIG; here P. 255. bisshepes P. 258. *Vigilare* IMFEG; *Vigilate* P. 261. beerke P.

'Pers,' quod a prest tho · 'thi pardon most I reden,
For I wol construe vch a clause · and knowen hit in Englisch.'
And Pers at his preyere · the pardon vnfoldeth,
And I bi-hynden hem bothe · bi-heold al the bulle.
In two lynes hit lay · and not a lettre more,
And was i-writen riht thus · in witnesse of treuthe:

'Pieres,' quod a prest tho · 'thi pardoun most I rede,
For I wil construe eche clause · and kenne it the on Engliche.'
And Pieres at his preyere · the pardoun vnfoldeth,
And I bihynde hem bothe · bihelde al the bulle.
Al in two lynes it lay · and nouȝt a leef more,
And was writen riȝt thus · in witnesse of treuthe:
Et qui bona egerunt, ibunt in vitam eternam;
Qui vero mala, in ignem eternum.
'Peter!' quod the prest tho · 'I can no pardoun fynde,
But "Dowel, and haue wel · and god shal haue thi sowle,
And do yuel, and haue yuel · hope thow non other
But after thi ded-day · the deuel shal haue thi sowle!"'

B. 115. But WCO; That LR.

Et qui bona egerunt, ibunt in vitam eternam;
Qui vero mala, in ignem eternum.

'Peter!' quod the preost tho · 'I con no pardoun fynde,
Bote "dowel, and haue wel · and god schal haue thi soule,
And do vuel, and haue vuel · hope thou non othur,
That aftur thi deth-day · to helle schaltou wende!"'

The tarre is vntydy · that to thyne sheep by-longeth,
Hure salue ys of *supersedeas* · in someneres boxes;
Thyne sheep are ner al shabbyd · the wolf shiteth woolle:
Sub molli pastore · lupus lanam cacat, et grex
In-custoditus · dilaceratur eo.
Hoow! hurde! wher is thyn hounde · and thyn hardy herte,
For to wyrie the wolf · that thy woolle fouleth?
Ich leyue, for thy lacchesse · thow leest meny wedores,
And ful meny fayre flus · falsliche wasshe!
When thy lord loketh to haue · a-louaunce for hus bestes,
And of the monye thow haddist ther-myd · hus meoble to saue,
And the woolle worth weye · woo ys the thenne!
Redde rationem uillicacionis tue · other in arerage falle!
Thyn hyre, hurde, as ich hope · hath nouht to quyty thy dette,
Ther as mede ne mercy · may nat a myte auayle,
Bote 'haue this for that · tho that thow toke
Mercy for mede · and my lawe breke,
Loke now for thi lacchesse · whether lawe wol the graunte
Purgatorie for thy paye · other perpetuel helle?'
For shal no pardoune praye for 3ow ther · nother princes letteres.'
'Peers,' quath a prest tho · 'thy pardoune most ich rede,
Ich can construen ech worde · and kenne hit the in Englishe.'
And Peers at hus preyere · the pardon vnfolded,
And ich by-hynde hem bothe · by-heeld al the bulle.
In two lynes hit lay · and no lettere more,
And was ywryte ryght thus · in witnesse of treuthe.
Qui bona egerunt ibunt in uitam eternam:
Qui uero mala, in ignem eternum.
'Peter!' quath the prest tho · 'ich can no pardon fynde,
Bote "do wel and haue wel · and god shal haue thy saule,
Do vuel and haue vuel · and hope thow non other
Bote he that vuel lyueth · vuel shal ende!"'

C. 274. in IMFEG; P *om.* 275. Then (*for* Thyn) P. 281. 3owe P.

And Pers, for puire teone · pollede hit a-sonder,
And siththe he seide to hem · these semely sawis,
'*Si ambulauero in medio vmbre mortis, non timebo mala, quoniam tu mecum es.*
I schal sese of my sowynge,' quod Pers · 'and swynke not so harde,
Ne aboute my lyflode · so bisy beo no more!
Of preyere and of penaunce · my plouh schal ben heraftur,
And bi-loure that I beo-louh · er my lyf fayle.
The prophete his payn eet · in penaunce and wepyng;
As the psauter vs seith · so dude moni othere;
That loueth God lelly · his lyflode is wel muche:
Fuerunt michi lacrime mee panes, die ac nocte.

And Pieres for pure tene · pulled it atweyne,
And seyde, '*si ambulauero in medio vmbre mortis, non timebo mala; quoniam tu mecum es.*
I shal cessen of my sowyng, quod Pieres · 'and swynk nou3t so harde,
Ne about my bely-ioye · so bisi be namore!
Of preyers and of penaunce · my plow shal ben herafter,
And wepen whan I shulde slepe · though whete-bred me faille.
The prophete his payn ete · in penaunce and in sorwe,
By that the sauter seith · so dede other manye;
That loueth god lelly · his lyflode is ful esy:
Fuerunt michi lacrime mee panes die ac nocte.
And, but if Luke lye · he lereth vs bi foules,
We shulde nou3t be to bisy · aboute the worldes blisse;
Ne solliciti sitis · he seyth in the gospel,
And sheweth vs bi ensamples · vs selue to wisse.
The foules on the felde · who fynt hem mete at wynter?
Haue thei no gernere to go to · but god fynt hem alle.'
'What!' quod the prest to Perkyn · 'Peter! as me thinketh,
Thow art lettred a litel · who lerned the on boke?'
'Abstinence the abbesse,' quod Pieres · 'myne a. b. c. me tau3te,
And Conscience come afterward · and kenned me moche more.'
'Were thow a prest, Pieres,' quod he · 'thow mi3te preche where thow sholdest,
As deuynour in deuynyte · with *dixit insipiens* to thi teme.'

And bote ȝif Luke lyȝe · he lereth vs a-nother;
That to bisi we ne schulde beo · her vppon eorthe,
While we woneth in this world · to make vs wombe-ioye.
Ne soliciti sitis · he seith in his godspel,
And scheweth hit by ensaumple · vr soules to wisse.
The foules in the firmament · who fynt hem in winter?
Whon the forst freseth · foode hem bi-houeth;
Haue thei no gerner to go to · ȝit god fynt hem alle.'
'What?' quod the prest to Perkyn · 'Peter! as me thinketh,
Thow art lettret a luyte · ho lered the on boke?'
'Abstinence the abbesse · myn a-b-ce me tauȝte,
And Concience com aftur · and kennide me betere.'
'Weore thou a prest,' quod he · 'thou mihtest preche whon the luste,
Quoniam literaturam non cognoui · mihte be thy teeme!'

A. 101. *This line is in* H *only*; VTU *have* and seide, *at end of* l. 100. V omits all after *timebo*. 106. prophete—eet U; prophetes peyneden hem V. 109. ȝif luke UT; luk H; the bok V. 114. who fynt THU (*see* l. 116); heo feedeth V. 120. kennide TU; tauȝte VH. 122. thy HTU; my V.

'Lewede lorel!' quod he · 'luite lokestou on the bible,
On Salamones sawes · seldom thou bi-holdest;
Slynge awey these scorners, he seith · with here shrewid fliting,
For with hem redely · y kepe not to rest;
Eice derisores et iurgia cum eis, ne crescant.'
The prest and Perkin tho · apposeden either other,
And thorw heore wordes I a-wok · and waitide aboute,
And sauh the sonne sitte south · euene that tyme.
Meteles and moneyeles · on Maluerne hulles,
Musyng on this meeteles · a myle-wei ich ȝeode.
Mony tyme this metels · han made me to studie
For Pers loue, the plouh-mon · ful pensyf in myn herte;

'Lewed lorel!' quod Pieres · 'litel lokestow on the bible,
On Salomones sawes · selden thow biholdest,
Eice derisores et iurgia cum eis, ne crescant, &c.'
The prest and Perkyn · apposeden eyther other,
And I thorw here wordes a-woke · and waited aboute,
And seighe the sonne in the south · sitte that tyme,
Metelees and monelees · on Maluerne hulles,
Musyng on this meteles; · and my waye ich ȝede.
Many tyme this meteles · hath maked me to studye
Of that I seigh slepyng · if it so be myȝte,
And also for Peres the plowman · ful pensyf in herte,
And which a pardoun Peres hadde · alle the peple to conforte,
And how the prest impugned it · with two propre wordes.
Ac I haue no sauoure in songewarie · for I se it ofte faille;
Catoun and canonistres · conseilleth vs to leue
To sette sadnesse in songewarie · for, *sompnia ne cures.*
Ac for the boke bible · bereth witnesse,
How Danyel deuyned · the dremes of a kynge,
That was Nabugodonosor · nempned of clerkis.
Daniel seyde, 'sire kynge · thi dremeles bitokneth,
That vnkouth knyȝtes shul come · thi kyngdom to cleue;
Amonges lowere lordes · thi londe shal be departed.'
And as Danyel deuyned · in dede it felle after,
The kynge lese his lordship · and lower men it hadde.

A. 124. seldom U; luitel V. 125, 126. *These lines are in* H *only.* For *Eice* VTHU have *Ecce.* *ne crescant* TU; *nunc crescunt* V. 128. waitide

For that I sauh slepynge · ȝif hit so be mihte.
Bote Catoun construweth hit nay · an canonistres bothe,
And siggen bi hem-seluen · *sompnia ne cures.*
Ac for the bible · bereth witnesse hou
Daniel deuynede · the dremels of a kyng,
That Nabugodonosor · nempne these clerkes.
Daniel seide, 'sir kyng · thi sweuene is to mene,
That vnkouthe knihtes schul come · thi kingdam to clayme;
Among lower lordes · thi lond schal be departet.'
As Daniel diuinede · hit fel in dede after,
The kyng laste his lordschupe · and lasse men hit hadden.

The preest thus and Perkyn · of the pardon Iangled.
Throgh here wordes ich awook · and waitede aboute,
And seih the sonne in the south · sitte that tyme.
Meteles and moneyles · on Maluerne hulles,
Musynge on this meteles · a myle-wey ich ȝeode.
And meny tymes this meteles · made me to studie
Of that ich seih slepynge · yf hit so be myghte,
And of Peers Plouhman · ful pensyf in herte,
And which a pardon Peers hadde · the puple to gladen,
And how the preest inpugned hit · thorwe two propre wordes.
Ac men setten nat by songewarie · men seen hit ofte faile,
Caton counteth hit at nouht · and canonistres at lasse.

Ac for the bok bible · bereth good wyttnesse,
How Daniel dyuinede · and vndude the dremeles
Of kyng Nabugodonosor · that no peer hadde,
And sitthe after to hus sones · seide hem what thei thouhte:—

THU; lokede V. 131. Musyng THU; Mony elynge V. 139. nempne—clerkes UT; V *om.* 141. kindam V. **B.** 137. *Eice* O; *Ecce* LWRC. **C.** 296. þees P; *see* l. 297. 299. ful IFG; P *om.* 302. mei P (*for 2nd* men).

And Ioseph mette metels · ful meruilous alse,
How the sonne and the mone · and enleuene sterres
Falden bi-fore his feet · and heileden him alle.
'*Beu fiz*,' quod his fader · 'for defaute we schulle,
I my-self, and my sones · seche the for neode.'
Hit fel as the fader seide · in Pharaones tyme,
Ther Ioseph was Iustise · Egipte to kepen.
Al this maketh me · on metels to thenken
Mony tyme at midniht · whon men schulde slepe,
On Pers the plouh-mon · and whuch a pardoun he hedde,
And hou the preost inpugnede hit · al bi pure resoun,

And Ioseph mette merueillously · how the mone and the sonne,
And the elleuene sterres · hailsed hym alle.
Thanne Iacob iugged · Iosephes sweuene:
'*Beau filiz*,' quod his fader · 'for defaute we shullen,
I my-self and my sones · seche the for nede.'
It bifel as his fader seyde · in Pharaoes tyme,
That Ioseph was Iustice · Egipte to loken,
It bifel as his fader tolde · his frendes there hym sou3te.
And al this maketh me · on this meteles to thynke;
And how the prest preued · no pardoun to Dowel,
And demed that Dowel · indulgences passed,
Biennales and triennales · and bisschopes lettres,
And how Dowel at the day of dome · is dignelich vnderfongen,
And passeth al the pardoun · of seynt Petres cherche.

Now hath the pope powere · pardoun to graunte the peple
With-outen eny penaunce · to passen in-to heuene;
This is owre bileue · as lettered men vs techeth,
Quodcumque ligaueris super terram, erit ligatum et in celis, &c.

And so I leue lelly · (lordes forbode ellis!)
That pardoun and penaunce · and preyeres don saue
Soules that haue synned · seuene sithes dedly.

A. 153. men T; I VU. C. 308. mette IMFEG; mete P. 312. þe MFEG; P *om.* 313. pharaoes MFE; pharao hus P. 318. preeued P. 321.

And diuinede that Dowel · indulgence passede,
Bienals and trienals · and busschopes lettres.
Dowel on domesday · is digneliche i-preiset,
He passeth al the pardouns · of seint Petrus churche.
Now hath the pope pouwer · pardoun to graunte,
The peple with-oute penaunce · to passe to ioye.
This is a lef of vre bileeue · as lettret men vs techeth,
Quodcunque ligaueris super terram, erit ligatum et in celis.
And so bileeue I lelly · (vr lord forbeode hit elles!)
That pardoun and penaunce · and preyers don sauen
Soules that han sunget · seuen sithes dedlich.

And Ioseph mette meruelousliche · how the mone and the sonne
And elleuene sterres · hailsede hym alle;
Thenne Iacob Iuged · Iosephes sweuene:
'*Beau fitz*,' quath the fader · 'we shulleth for defaute,
Ich my-self and my sones · seche the for neede;'
Hit by-fel as the fader seide · in Pharaoes tyme,
That Ioseph was Iustice · Egipte to saue;
Hus eleuene brotheres · hym for neede souhte,
And hus fader Iacob · and al-so hus dame:—
Al this maketh me · on meteles to studie,
And how the preest preuede · no pardon to Do-wel;
And demede that Dowel · indulgences passede,
Byennals · and tryennals · and bisshopes letteres.
For ho so doth wel here · at the daye of dome
Worth faire vnderfonge · by-for god that tyme.
So Dowel passeth pardon · and pilgrimages to Rome;
3ut hath the pope power · pardon to graunte
To puple, with-oute penaunce · to passen in-to Ioye,
As lettred men ous lereth · and lawe of holy churche:
Quodcunque ligaueris super terram erit ligatum et in celis;
Et quodcunque solueris super terram erit solutum et in celis.
And so ich by-leyue leelly · lordes forbode elles,
That pardon and penaunce · and preieres don saue
Saules that han synged · seuene sithes dedliche.

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doþ wel MEFG; wel doþ P. 327. by-leue P (*elsewhere* by-leyue). 329. Saules E; Soules MIFG; Saule P. sithes IFG; sithe PE.

Bote trustene to trienals · treuly me thinketh
Is not so syker for the soule · sertes, as Do-wel.
For-thi I rede ȝow renkes · that riche ben on eorthe,
Vppon trust of oure tresour · trienals to haue,
Beo ȝe neuer the baldore · to breke the ten hestes;
And nomeliche, ȝe meires · and ȝe maister iuges,
That han the welthe of this world · for wyse men ben holden,
To purchasen pardoun · and the popes bulles.
At the dredful day of dom · ther dede schullen a-rysen,
And comen alle bi-fore Crist · and a-countes ȝelden,
How thou laddest thi lyf · and his lawe keptest,
What thou dudest day bi day · the doom the wol rehersen;
A powhe-ful of pardoun ther · with prouincials lettres,

Ac to trust to thise triennales · trewly me thinketh,
Is nouȝt so syker for the soule · certis, as is Dowel.
For-thi I rede ȝow, renkes · that riche ben on this erthe,
Vppon trust of ȝowre tresoure · triennales to haue,
Be ȝe neuere the balder · to breke the ten hestes;
And namelich, ȝe maistres · mayres and iugges,
That han the welthe of this worlde · and for wyse men ben holden,
To purchace ȝow pardoun · and the popis bulles.
At the dredeful dome · whan dede shullen rise,
And comen alle bifor Cryst · acountis to ȝelde,
How thow laddest thi lyf here · and his lawes keptest,
And how thow dedest day bi day · the dome wil reherce;
A poke-ful of pardoun there · ne prouinciales lettres,
Theigh ȝe be founde in the fraternete · of alle the foure ordres,
And haue indulgences double-folde · but if Dowel ȝow help,
I sette ȝowre patentes and ȝowre pardounz · at one pies hele!
For-thi I conseille alle Cristene · to crye god mercy,
And Marie his moder · be owre mene bitwene,
That god gyue vs grace here · ar we gone hennes,
Suche werkes to werche · while we ben here,
That after owre deth-day · Dowel reherce,
At the day of dome · we dede as he hiȝte.

A. 187. Colophon *from* TUD; V *omits it.* B. 183. ten CRO; x L.

Thauh thou be founden in fraternite · a-mong the foure ordres,
And habbe indulgence i-doubled · bote Dowel the helpe,
I nolde ȝeue for thi pardoun · one pye-hele!
Forthi I counseile alle Cristene · to crie Crist merci,
And Marie his moder · to beo mene bi-twene,
That god ȝiue vs grace · er we gon hennes,
Such werkes to worche · while that we ben here,
That aftur vr deth-day · Dowel reherce,
That atte day of dom · we duden as he us hiȝte.

Explicit hic Visio Willelmi de Petro le Plouȝman. Eciam incipit Vita de Do-wel, Do-bet, et Do-best secundum wyt et resoun.

Ac to trysten vpon triennels · treweliche me thynketh
Ys nat so syker for the saule · certys, as ys Dowel.
For-thi ich rede ȝow, renkes · that riche ben on thys erthe,
Vp trist of ȝoure tresour · tryennels to haue,
Be ȝe neuere the boldere · to breke the ten hestes;
And nameliche, ȝe maistres · meyres and Iuges,
That han the welthe of this worlde · and wise men ben holde,
To purchace ȝow pardon · and the popes bulles.
At the dredful day of dome · when dede men shullen ryse,
And comen alle by-fore Crist · a-countes to ȝelde,
Howe we ladde oure lyf here · and hus lawes kepte,
And how we dude day by day · the dome wol reherce.
A poke-ful of pardon there · ne prouincials letteres,
Thauh we be founde in fraternite · of alle fyue ordres,
And haue indulgences doblefolde · bote Dowel ous helpe,
Ich sette by pardon nat a peese · nother a pye-hele!
For-thi ich counsaile alle Cristine · to crye god mercy,
And Marye hus moder · be oure mene to hym,
That god ȝeue ous grace here · er we go hennes,
Suche workes to worche · whil we ben here,
That after oure deth-day · Dowel reherce
At the day of dome · we dude as he tauhte.—*Amen.*

Hic explicit uisio Willelmi de Petro Plouhman.

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187. dede WCR; ded L. C. 330. apon (*for* vpon) P. 343. we IG; he PMEF; *cf.* l. 344. 345. hele IMEG; hyle P.

PASSUS IX.

Incipit hic Dowel, Dobet, and Dobest.

THUS i-robed in russet · romed I a-boute
Al a somer sesoun · for to seche Dowel,
And fraynide ful ofte · of folk that I mette
ȝif any wiȝt wiste · where Do-wel was at inne,
And what man he miȝte be · of many man I askide.

PASSUS VIII.

Passus octauus de visione Petri Plowman. Incipit Dowel, Dobet, et Dobest.

THUS yrobed in russet · I romed aboute
Al a somer sesoun · for to seke Dowel,
And frayned ful oft · of folke that I mette,
If ani wiȝte wiste · where Dowel was at inne,
And what man he miȝte be · of many man I axed.
Was neuere wiȝte, as I went · that me wisse couthe
Where this lede lenged · lasse ne more;
Tyl it bifel on a Fryday · two freres I mette,
Maistres of the menoures · men of grete witte.
I hailsed hem hendely · as I hadde lerned,
And preyed hem par charitee · ar thei passed forther,
If thei knewe any contre · or costes, as thei went,
Where that Dowel dwelleth · doth me to wytene.
For thei ben men on this molde · that moste wyde walken,
And knowen contrees, and courtes · and many kynnes places,
Bothe prynces paleyses · and pore mennes cotes,
And Do-wel and Do-yuel · where thei dwelle bothe.
'Amonges vs,' quod the menours · 'that man is dwellynge,
And euere hath, as I hope · and euere shal here-after.'

A. 3. fraynide TH_2; askede V. folk TUH_2; Men V. 4, 5. *These two lines are from* T; *also in* UH_2; V *om.* 11. V *has* furre passede; passide ferþere TUH_2. 12. V knewe, *and om.* any. 14. þe TH_2; a V. **B.** 1.

Was neuer wiht as I wente · that me wisse couthe
Wher this ladde loggede · lasse ne more;
Til hit fel on a Friday · twei freres I mette,
Maistres of the menours · men of grete wittes.
Ich heilede hem hendeli · as ich hedde i-leorned,
And preiede hem, par charite · er thei passede furre,
'3if thei knewen any cuntre · or coostes a-boute
Wher that Dowel dwelleth · do me to wisse.'
'Mari,' quod the menour · 'a-mong vs he dwelleth,
And euer hath, as ich hope · and euer schal her-after.'

PASSUS XI.

Incipit uisio eiusdem Willelmi de Dowel.

THUS robed in russett · ich romede a-boute,
Al a somer seson · for to seke Dowel,
And frainede ful ofte · of folke that ich mette,
Yf eny wiht wist · wher Dowel was at ynne,
And what man he myghte be · of meny man ich askede.
Was neuere wiht in this worlde · that wisse me couthe,
Wher that he longede · lasse ne more;
Til hit by-ful on a Frydaye · two freres ich mette,
Maisteres of the menours · men of grete witte.
Ich hailsede hem hendilyche · as ich hadde ylerned,
And prayede pur charite · ar thei passede forthere,
Yf thei knew eny contreie · other costes a-aboute,
Wher that Dowel dwelleth— · 'dere frendes, telleth me;
For 3e aren men of thys molde · that most wide walken,
And knowen contreies and courtes · and menye kynne places,
Bothe princes paleis · and poure menne cotes,
And Dowel and Do-vuele · wher thei dwellen bothe.'
'Sothliche,' seide the frere · 'he soiourneth with ous freres,
And ay hath, as ich hope · and euer wol her-after.'

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romed WCRO; rowmed L. C. 3. And IMGF; P *om.* 4. with (*for* wiht) P. wer P. 9. þe IEF; PMS *om.* 10. ylernede P. 19. euer FGI; P *om*

'*Contra*,' quod I as a clerk · and comsede to dispuite,
'*Sepcies in die cadit iustus*;
Seue sithes a day, seith the bok · sungeth the rihtful mon;
And hose sungeth,' I seide · 'certes, as me thinketh,
That Dowel and Do-vuele · mowe not dwelle togedere.
Ergo, he nis not alwey · at hom among ow freres,
He is other while elles-wher · to wisse the peple.'
'I schal seie the, my sone' · seide the frere thenne,
'Hou seuen sithes the sadde mon · sungeth in a day;
Bi a forebisene,' seide the frere · 'I schal the feire schewe.

'*Contra*,' quod I as a clerke · and comsed to disputen,
And seide hem sothli, '*sepcies · in die cadit iustus*;

Seuene sythes, seith the boke · synneth the riȝtful.

And who-so synneth,' I seyde · 'doth yuel, as me thinketh,
And Dowel and Do-yuel · mow nouȝt dwelle togideres.
Ergo, he nys nauȝt alway · amonge ȝow freres;
He is otherwhile ellis-where · to wisse the peple.'
'I shal sey the, my sone' · seide the frere thanne,
'How seuene sithes the sadman · on the day synneth;
By a forbisene,' quod the frere · 'I shal the faire shewe.
Lat brynge a man in a bote · amydde a brode water,
The wynde and the water · and the bote waggynge
Maketh the man many a tyme · to falle and to stonde;
For stonde he neuere so styf · he stombleth ȝif he moeue;

Ac ȝit is he sauf and sounde · and so hym bihoueth,
For ȝif he ne arise the rather · and rauȝte to the stiere,
The wynde wolde, wyth the water · the bote ouerthrowe;
And thanne were his lyf loste · thourgh lacchesse of hym-self.

And thus it falleth,' quod the frere · 'bi folke here on erthe;
The water is likned to the worlde · that wanyeth and wexeth,

A. 16. *Latin from* TUH$_2$; V *om.* 20. at hom TH$_2$; a tom V.
21. other TH$_2$; or V. 24. a forebisene TUH$_2$; ensaumple V.

Let bringe a mon in a bot · a-midde a brod water,
And the wint and the watur · and the waggyng of the bot
Maketh the mon mony tyme · to stomble and to falle;
(For stonde he neuere so stif · he stumbleth in the waggyng);
And ȝit he is saaf and sound · and so him bi-houeth;
For ȝif he ne rise the rather · and rauhte to the steorne,
The wynt wolde with the water · the bot ouer-throwe;
Ther weore the monnes lyf i-lost · thorw lachesse of himselue.
Riht thus hit fareth,' quod the frere · 'bi folk her on eorthe;
The watur is liknet to the world · that wonieth and waxeth;

'*Contra*,' quath ich as a clerke · and comsede to dispute,
And seide sothliche · '*septies in die cadit iustus*,
Fallynge fro ioye · Iesus wot the sothe!
"Seuene sythes," seith the bok · "syngeth day by day
The alther-ryghtfulleste renk · that regneth vpon erthe."
And ho so syngeth,' ich seide · 'certys, doth nat wel;
For ho so syngeth · sikerliche doth vuele,
And Do-wel and Do-vuele · may nat dwelle to-gederes.
Ergo, he ys nat al-way · at hom among ȝow Freres;
He is som while elles-wher · to wisse the puple.'
'Ich shal sei the, my sone,' · seide the frere thenne,
'How seuene sithes the sadde man · syngeth on the day.
By a forbusene,' quath the frere · 'ich shal the faire shewe.
Let brynge a man in a bot · in-myddes a brode water;
The wynde and the water · and waggynge of the bote
Maketh the man meny tyme · to stomble, yf he stande;
Stonde he neuere so styfliche · thorgh sterynge of the bote
He bendeth and boweth · the body is vnstable,
Ac ȝut he is saf and sounde; · so fareth hit by the ryghtful.
Thauh he falle, he falleth nat · bote as ho fulle in a bote,
That ay is saf and sounde · that sitteth with-ynne the borde.
So hit fareth,' quath the frere · 'by ryghtful mannes fallynge;
Thawe he thorgh fondinge falle · he falleth nat out of charite;
So dedliche synne doth he nat · for Dowel hym helpeth.
The water ys likned to the worlde · that wanyeth and wexeth;

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32. lachesse TUH$_2$; sleuþe V. **B.** 21. hem WCOB; L *om.* **C.** 23. sythe P. 26. synegeþ P. 37. his (*for* is) P. 42. þorghe P.

The goodes in this world · ben lyk this grete wawes,
Riht as wyndes and watres · waleweth aboute.
The bot is liknet to the bodi · that brutel is of kuynde;
And thorw the fend and his flesch · and the false world
Sungeth the sadde mon · seuen sithes in the day.
But dedly sunne doth he not · for Dowel him helpeth,
That is, Charite the champion · cheef help aȝeyn sunne;
For he strengtheth the to stonde · he stureth thi soule,
That thauȝ thi bodi bouwe · as a bot in the water,
Euer is thi soule saaf · bote ȝif thi-self wolle.

The godis of this grounde aren like · to the grete wawes,
That as wyndes and wederes · walweth aboute.
The bote is likned to owre body · that brutel is of kynde,
That thorugh the fende and the flesshe · and the frele worlde
Synneth the sadman · a day, seuene sythes.
Ac dedly synne doth he nouȝt · for Dowel hym kepith,
And that is Charite the champioun · chief help aȝein synne;
For he strengtheth man to stonde · and stereth mannes soule,
And thowgh thi body bow · as bote doth in the water,
Ay is thi soule sauf · but if thi-self wole
Do a dedly synne · and drenche so thi soule;
God wole suffre wel thi sleuthe · ȝif thy-self lyketh.
For he ȝaf the to ȝeresȝyue · to ȝeme wel thi-selue,
And that is witte and fre wille · to euery wyȝte a porcioun,
To fleghyng foules · to fissches & to bestes.
Ac man hath moste thereof · and moste is to blame,
But if he worche wel ther-with · as Dowel hym techeth.'
'I haue no kynde knowyng,' quod I · 'to conceyue alle ȝowre wordes,
Ac if I may lyue and loke · I shal go lerne bettere.'
'I bikenne the Cryst,' quod he · 'that on the crosse deyde.'
And I seyde, 'the same · saue ȝow fro myschaunce,
And ȝiue ȝow grace on this grounde · good men to worthe.'
And thus I went wide-where · walkyng myne one,
By a wilde wildernesse · and bi a wode-syde.
Blisse of tho briddes · abyde me made,

A. 47. þiself—maistrie TH_2; þou art þin owne mayster V. 50. þe TUH_2; V *om.* **B.** 43. (*2nd*) þe WCOB; þi LR. 49. if WCOB; LR *om.* 53. a (*for* and) L. 59. quod he W; LCOB *om.* 64. abyde me made R;

Folewe thi flessches wil · and the fendes aftur,
And do dedlich ſunne · and drenche thi-seluen,
God wol soffre the dye so · for thi-self hast the maistrie.'
'I haue no kynde knowyng,' quod I · 'to conceyue thi wordes,
But ȝif I may liuen and loken · I schal go lerne betere.
I beo-take ȝou to crist · that on the crois diȝede.'
And thei seiden the same · 'God saue the from mischaunce,
And ȝiue the grace vppon grounde · in good lyf to ende.'
Thus I wente wyden-wher · Dowel to seche;
And as I wente bi a wode · walkyng myn one,
Blisse of the briddes · made me to abyde,

The godes of this grounde aren lyke · to the grete wawes,
That as wyndes and wederes · walwen a-boute;
The bot ys lykned to oure body · that brotel ys of kynde,
That thorgh the fende and oure flesch · and this frele worlde
Syngeth seuene sithes · the saddest man on erthe,
And lyfholiest of lyf · that lyueth vnder the sonne.

Ac free wil and free wit · folweth a man euere
To repenten and ryse · and rowen out of synne,
To contricion, to confession · til he come to hus ende.
Rather haue we no reste · til we restitue
Our lyf to oure lord god · for oure lykames gultes.'

'Ich haue no kynde knowyng,' quath ich · 'to conceyue al thy speche,
Ac yf ich may lyue and loke · ich shal go lerne bettere.'
'Ich by-kenne the Crist,' quath he · 'that on the croice deide.'
And iche seide, 'the same · saue ȝow fro meschaunce,
And gyue me grace on this grounde · with good ende to deye.'
Ich wente forth wyde-where · walkynge myn one,
In a wylde wyldernesse · by a wode-syde.
Blisse of the briddes · a-byde me made,

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brouȝte me aslepe LWCOB; *cf.* l. 67. C. 45. þis IMFEG; þe P. 46. That I; For F; P *om.* 47. lycknede P; *see* l. 44. 49. Senegeþ P. sithes IMFE; sithe P. 63. þe IMFG; P *om.*

And vnder a lynde, vppon a launde · leonede I a stounde,
For to leorne the layes · that louely foules maden.
Blisse of the briddes · brouȝten me a slepe;
The meruiloste meetynge · mette I me thenne
That euere dremede driht · in drecchynge, I wene.
A muche mon, me thouhte · lyk to my-seluen,
Com and clepede me · be my kuynde nome.
'What art thou,' quod I · 'that my nome knowest?'
'That thow wost wel,' quod he · 'and no wiȝt betere.'
'Wot I,' quod I, 'ho art thou?' · 'Thought,' seide he thenne,
'I haue suwed the this seuen ȝer · seȝe thou me no rathere?'
'Art thou Thouȝt?' quod I tho · 'const thou me telle,

And vnder a lynde vppon a launde · lened I a stounde,
To lythe the layes · the louely foules made.
Murthe of her mouthes · made me there to slepe;
The merueillousest meteles · mette me thanne
That euer dremed wyȝte · in worlde, as I wene.
A moche man, as me thouȝte · and lyke to my-selue
Come and called me · by my kynde name.
'What artow,' quod I tho · 'that thow my name knowest?'
'That thow wost wel,' quod he · 'and no wyȝte bettere.'
'Wote I what thow art?' · 'Thought,' seyde he thanne,
'I haue suwed the this seuene ȝere · sey thow me no rather?'
'Art thow Thought!' quod I tho · 'thou couthest me wisse
Where that Dowel dwelleth · and do me that to knowe?'
'Dowel and Dobet · and Dobest the thridde,' quod he,
'Aren three faire vertues · and beth nauȝte fer to fynde.
Who-so is trewe of his tonge · and of his two handes,
And thorugh his laboure or thorugh his londe · his lyflode wynneth,
And is trusti of his tailende · taketh but his owne,
And is nouȝt dronkenlew ne dedeignous · Dowel hym folweth.
Dobet doth ryȝt thus · ac he doth moche more;
He is as low as a lombe · and loueliche of speche,
And helpeth alle men · after that hem nedeth;
The bagges and the bigurdeles · he hath to-broken hem alle,

A. 64. wiȝt TUH$_2$; bodi V. 65. thought—þenne *from* U; V *has* þhouȝte I me seide I þenne. 66. V *om.* þou. 71. He (*for* Ho) V. **C.** 69.

Wher that Dowel dwelleth · do me to wisse?'
'Dowel,' quod he, 'and Dobet · and Dobest the thridde
Beoth threo faire vertues · and beoth not fer to fynde.
Ho is meke of his mouth · mylde of his speche,
Trewe of his tonge · and of his two hondes,
And bi his labur or bi his lond · his lyflode wynneth,
And trusti of his taylende · taketh bote his owne,
And is not dronkeleuh ne deynous · Dowel him foleweth.
Dobet doth thus · bote he doth muche more;
He is as louh as a lomb · louelich of speche;
While he hath ouȝt of his owne · he helpeth ther neod is,
The bagges and the bi-gurdeles · he hath broken hem alle

And vnder lynde in a launde · lenede ich a stounde,
To lithen here laies · and here loueliche notes.
Murthe of here murye mouthes · made me to slepe;
And merueilousliche me mette · a-myddes al that blisse.
A muche man, me thouhte · lyke to my-selue,
Cam and callede me · by my kynde name.
'What art thow?' quath ich · 'that my name knowest?'
'That wost thou, Wille,' quath he · 'and no wight betere.'
'Wot ich,' quath ich, 'ho art thow?' · 'Thouhte,' seide he thenne;
'Ich haue the suwed this seue ȝer · seih thou me no rather?'
'Art thou Thouhte?' quath ich tho · 'thow couthest me wisse
Where that Dowel dwelleth · and do me to knowe?'
'Dowel and Dobet,' quath he · 'and Dobest the thridde
Beth thre fayre vertues · and beeth nauht ferr to fynde.
Who-so is trewe of hys tonge · and of hus two handes,
And thorw leel labour lyueth · and loueth his emcristine,

And ther-to trewe of hus tail · and halt wel his handes,
Nouht dronkelewe ne deynous · Dowel hym folweth.
Dobet doth al this · ac ȝut he doth more;
He is lowe as a lombe · and loueliche of speche,
And helpeth herteliche alle men · of that he may aspare.
The bagges and the by-gurdeles · he hath to-broke hem alle,

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kynde I; ryhte PEFMG. 70, 72. ert P. 74. Ert P. 78. trywe P. two EF; to P. 79. þorwe P. 80. trywe P.

That the Auerous hedde · or eny of his heires;
And with Mammonas moneye · hath maked him frendes,
And is ronnen in-to religiun · and hath rendret the bible,
And precheth the peple · seint Poules wordes,
Libenter sufferte.
"3e wyse, soffreth the vn-wyse · with ow for to libbe,"
And with glad wille doth hem good · for so god himself hi3te.
Dobest is a-boue bothe · and bereth a busschopes cros,
Is hoket atte ende · to holden hem in good lyf.
A pyk is in that potent · to punge a-doun the wikkede,
That wayten eny wikkednesse · Dowel to teone.
And as Dowel and Dobet · duden hem to vnderstonde,
Thei han i-corouned a kyng · to kepen hem alle,

That the erl Auarous · helde, and his heires;
And thus with Mammonaes moneie · he hath made hym frendes,
And is ronne in-to Religioun · and hath rendred the bible,
And precheth to the poeple · seynt Poules wordes,
Libenter suffertis insipientes, cum sitis ipsi sapientes,
"And suffreth the vnwise · with 3ow for to libbe,"
And with gladde wille doth hem gode · for so god 3ow hoteth.
Dobest is aboue bothe · and bereth a bisschopes crosse,
Is hoked on that one ende · to halie men fro helle.
A pyke is on that potente · to pulte adown the wikked,
That wayten any wikkednesse · Dowel to tene.
And Dowel and Dobet · amonges hem ordeigned
To croune one to be kynge · to reule hem bothe;
That 3if Dowel or Dobet · did a3ein Dobest,
Thanne shal the kynge come · and casten hem in yrens,
And but if Dobest bede for hem · thei to be there for euere.

Thus Dowel and Dobet · and Dobest the thridde,
Crouned one to be kynge · to kepen hem alle,
And to reule the Reume · bi her thre wittes,
And none other-wise · but as thei thre assented.'
I thonked Thou3t tho · that he me thus tau3te;
'Ac 3ete sauoureth me nou3t thi seggyng · I coueite to lerne

A. 87. hem U; him V; men TH_2. 88. in þat potent TH_2; V *has* in þe ende, *copied by mistake from* l. 87. 93. *This line is from* T; *also in* UH_2; V *om.* 95. hem TUH_2; him V. 96. hem TUH_2; V *om.* 101. thou3t—that TH_2;

That ȝif Dowel or Dobet · dude aȝeyn Dobest,
And were vnbuxum at his biddinge · and bold to don ille,
Then schulde the kyng comen · and casten hem in prison,
And puiten hem ther in penaunce · with-outen pite or grace,
Bote ȝif Dobest beede for hem · a-byde ther for euere!
  Thus Dowel and Dobet · and Dobest the thridde
Crounede on to beo kyng · and bi heor counseil worche,
And rule the reame · bi red of hem alle,
And otherwyse elles not · bute as thei threo assenten.'
  I thonkede Thouȝt tho · that he me so tauȝte,
'But ȝit sauereth not me thi siggynge · so me God helpe,
More kuynde knowynge · I coueyte to here,

That the eorl Auerous · heeld, and hus eires;
And of Mammonaes moneye · mad hym meny frendes,
And is ronne in-to religion · and rendreth hus byble,
And precheth to the puple · seynt Poules wordes;
  Libenter suffertis insipientes, cum sitis ipsi sapientes;
"ȝe worldliche wyse · vnwyse that ȝe suffre,
Lene hem and loue hem" · this Latyn ys to mene.
  Dobest bere sholde · the bisshopes croce,
And halye with the hoked ende · ille men to goode,
And with the pyk putte adoũne · *preuaricatores legis*,
Lordes that lyuen as hem lust · and no lawe a-counten;
For here mok and here meeble · suche men thynken
That no bisshop sholde · here byddinge with-sitte.
Ac Dobest sholde nat dreden hem · bote do as god hihte,
  Nolite timere eos qui possunt occidere corpus.
  Thus Dowel and Dobet · diuinede, and Dobest,
And crounede on to be kyng · to culle with-oute synne
That wolde nat don as Dobest · diuinede and tauhte.
Thus Dowel and Dobet · and Dobest the thridde
Crounede on to be kyng · and kepen ous alle,
And reulen alle reaumes · by here thre wittes;
Bote other-wise ne elles nat · bote as thei three assented.'
  Ich thonked Thouht tho · that he me so tauhte:
'ȝut sauereth me nat thi sawe,' quath ich · 'so me Crist spede,
A more kynde knowyng · coueite ich to huyre

V *has* him feire · þo. **B.** 89. moneie WCOB; mone LR. 104. kepin L. **C.** 93. þe IMFG; P *om.* 96. For IMFSG; And fore P. 98. hem IMFSG; hym P.

Hou Dowel and Dobet · and Dobest beth on eorthe.'
'But Wit con wisse the,' quod Thouȝt · 'wher theos thre dwelleth,
Elles not no mon · that nou is alyue.'
Thus Thouȝt and I also · throly we eoden
Disputyng on Dowel · day aftur other,
And er we weoren war · with Wit conne we meeten.
He was long and lene · to loken on ful symple,

How Dowel, Dobet, and Dobest · don amonges the peple.'
'But Witte conne wisse the,' quod Thouȝt · 'where tho thre dwelle;
Ellis wote I none that can · that now is alyue.'
Thouȝte and I thus · thre days we ȝeden,
Disputyng vppon Dowel · day after other,
And ar we were ywar · with Witte gan we mete.
He was longe and lene · liche to none other,
Was no pruyde on his apparaille · ne pouerte noyther,
Sadde of his semblaunt · and of soft chiere.
I dorste meue no matere · to make hym to Iangle,
But as I bad Thouȝt tho · be mene bitwene,
And put forth somme purpos · to prouen his wittes,
What was Dowel fro Dobet · and Dobest fram hem bothe.
Thanne Thouȝt in that tyme · seide thise wordes,
'Where Dowel, Dobet · and Dobest ben in londe,
Here is Wille wolde ywyte · yif Witte couthe teche hym,
And whether he be man or no man · this man fayne wolde aspye,
And worchen as thei thre wolde · this is his entente.'

A. 111. *This line is from* T; *also in* H_2; VU *om.* 114. But as I bad þouȝt þo · be mene betwene TH_2U; V *has* þouȝt bad, *omitting* I. 118. hym TH_2U; V *om.* **B.** 125. L *om.* no. **C.** 109. dobest MFS; ho dobest P; who do best E; who doþ best I. 112. Thouth P. 118. dorste IS;

Was no pride on his apparail · ne no pouert nother,
Sad of his semblaunt · and of softe speche.
I durste meue no mateere · to make him to iangle,
Bote as I bad Thouȝt tho · to beo mẹne bi-twene,
To putte forth sum purpos · to preuen his wittes.
Thenne Thouȝt that tyme · seide theose wordes,
'Wher Dowel and Dobet · and Dobest beoth in londe,
Oure Wille wolde i-witen · ȝif Wit couthe hym techen.'

Of Dowel and of Dobet · and Dobest of alle.'
'Bote Wit wolle the wisse,' quath Thouht · 'wher tho thre dwellen;
Elles know ich non that can · in none kynriche.'
Thouht and ich thus thre daies · to-gederes we ȝeoden,
Disputynge vp Dowel · daye after othere;
And er we were ywar · with Wit gan we mete.
He was long and lene · lyke to non other,
Was no pruyde in hus aparail · ne pouerte nother;
Sad of hus semblant · with a softe speche.
Ich dorste meue no matere · to maken hym to Iangle,
Bote as ich bad Thouht tho · be mene by-twene,
And putte forth som purpos · to prouen hus wittes,
What Dowel was fro Dobet · and Dobest fro hem bothe.
Thenne Thouht in that tyme · seide these wordes,
'Wher Dowel and Dobet · and Dobest ben in londe
Her is on wolde wite · yf Wit couthe teche,
And what lyues thei lyuen · and what lawe thei vsen;
What thei drede and douten · dere syre, telleth.'[1]

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durst FE; þurste P. 119, 122. thouth P. 120. prooven P. 122. þat IMFSEG; þan P. seide MFG; seede P. þeese P. 123. Wher IMG; War P. been P. 126. an (*for* and) P. douhten P.

[1] *The* Passus *is continued on* p. 265.

PASSUS X.

Passus primus de Dowel, &c.

'SIRE Dowel dwelleth,' quod Wit · 'not a day hennes,
In a castel, of Kuynde i-mad · of foure kunne thinges,
Of erthe and eir hit is mad · i-medelet to-gedere,
With wynt and with watur · ful wittiliche i-meint.
Cuynde hath closet ther-in · craftiliche with-alle,
A loueli lemmon · lyk to him-self,
Anima heo hette; · to hire hath envye

PASSUS IX.

Passus nonus de visione; et primus de Dowel.

'SIRE Dowel dwelleth,' quod Witte · 'nou3t a day hennes,
In a castel that Kynde made · of foure kynnes thinges;
Of erthe and eyre is it made · medled togideres,
With wynde and with water · witterly enioyned.
Kynde hath closed there-inne · craftily with-alle,
A lemman that he loueth · like to hym-selue,
Anima she hatte · ac Enuye hir hateth,
A proude pryker of Fraunce · *prynceps huius mundi*,
And wolde winne hir awey · with wyles, and he my3te.
Ac Kynde knoweth this wel · and kepeth hir the bettere,
And hath do hir with sire Dowel · is duke of this marches.
Dobet is hir damoisele · sire Doweles dou3ter,
To serue this lady lelly · bothe late and rathe.
Dobest is aboue bothe · a bisschopes pere;
That he bit, mote be do · he reuleth hem alle;
Anima that lady · is ladde bi his lerynge.
Ac the constable of that castel · that kepeth al the wacche,
Is a wys kni3te with-al · sire Inwitte he hatte,
And hath fyue feyre sones · bi his first wyf;
Sire Sewel and Saywel · and Herewel the hende,

A. 6. to TUH$_2$; V *om.* 9. mihti V. 11, 12. Dowel—sire *from* U;

A proud prikere of Fraunce · *princeps huius mundi,*
And wolde wynnen hire a-wei · with wiles ȝif he mihte.
Bote Kuynde knoweth hit wel · and kepeth hire the betere,
And hath i-don hire to sire Dowel · duke of these marches.
Dobet is hire damysele · sire Doweles douȝter,
And serueth that ladi lelly · bothe late and rathe.
Thus Dowel and Dobet · and Dobest the thridde
Beoth maystres of this manere · that mayden to kepen.
But the cunstable of the castel · that kepeth hem alle,
Is a wys kniht with-alle · sire Inwit he hette,
And hath fyue feire sones · bi his furste wyf;
Sire Seowel and Seywel · and Herewel the hende,

[*This* Passus *is continued from* p. 263.]

'Syre Dowel dwelleth,' quath Wit · 'nat a daye hennes,
In a castel that Kynde made · of foure kyne thynges;
Of erthe, of aier yt is made · medled to-gederes,
With wynd and water · wittyliche en-ioyned.
Kynde hath closed ther-ynne · craftilyche with-alle
A lemman that he loueth wel · lyke to hym-selue;
Anima hue hatte · to hure hath enuye
A prout prikyere of Fraunce · *princeps huius mundi*,
And wolde wynne hure away · with wiles, yf he myghte.
And Kynde knoweth this wel · and kepeth hure the betere,
And dooth hure with syre Dowel · duk of thes marches.
Dobet ys here damsele · syre Doweles douhter,
To serue that lady leelly · bothe late and rathe.
Dobest ys a-boue bothe · a bisshopes peer,
And by hus lerynge is ladde · that ilke lady *Anima*.
The constable of that castel · that kepeth hem alle
Is a wys knyght with-alle · syre Inwit he hatte;
And hath fyue faire sones · by hus furste wyf,
Syre Seewel, syre Seiwel · syre Huyrewel the hende,

V *om. by mistake, owing to repetition of* sire. 19. hende TUH$_2$; V *has* ende.
C. 130. en-ioynede P.

Sire Worche-wel-with-thin-hond · a wiht mon of strengthe,
And sire Godfrei Gowel · grete lordes alle.
Theose sixe ben i-set · to saue the castel;
To kepe this wommon · this wyse men ben charget,
Til that Kuynde come or sende · and kepe hire himseluen.'
'What calle ȝe the castel,' quod I · 'that Kuynde hath I-maket,
And what cunnes thing is Kuynde · con ȝe me telle?'
'Kuynde,' quath he, 'is creatour · of alle kunne beestes,
Fader and foormere · the furste of alle thing;

Sire Worche-wel-wyth-thine-hande · a wiȝte man of strengthe,
And sire Godfrey Gowel · gret lordes for sothe.
Thise fyue ben sette · to saue this lady *Anima*,
Tyl Kynde come or sende · to saue hir for euere.'
'What kynnes thyng is Kynde,' quod I · 'canstow me telle?'
'Kynde,' quod Witte, 'is a creatour · of alle kynnes thinges;
Fader and fourmour · of al that euere was maked;
And that is the gret god · that gynnynge had neuere,
Lorde of lyf and of lyȝte · of lysse and of peyne.
Angeles and al thing · aren at his wille.
Ac man is hym moste lyke · of marke and of schafte;
For thorugh the worde that he spake · wexen forth bestes,
Dixit, et facta sunt;
And made man likkest · to hym-self one,
And Eue of his ribbe-bon · with-outen eny mene.
For he was synguler hym-self · and seyde *faciamus*,
As who seith, 'more mote here-to · than my worde one;
My myȝte mote helpe · now with my speche.'
Riȝte as a lorde sholde make lettres · and hym lakked parchemyn,
Though he couth write neuere so wel · ȝif he had no penne,
The lettres for al the lordship · I leue, were neuere ymaked.
And so it semeth bi hym · as the bible telleth,
There he seyde, *dixit, et facta sunt;*
He moste worche with his worde · and his witte shewe.
And in this manere was man made · thorugh myȝte of god almiȝti,
With his worde and werkemanschip · and with lyf to laste.
And thus god gaf hym a goost · of the godhed of heuene,
And of his grete grace · graunted hym blisse,
And that is lyf that ay shal last · to al his lynage after.

That is the grete god · that bigynnyng hedde neuere,
The lord of lyf and of liht · of lisse and of peyne.
Angeles and alle thing · arn at his wille,
Bote mon is him most lyk · of marke and of schap;
For with word that he warp · woxen forth beestes,
And alle thing at his wille · was wrouȝt with a speche,
Dixit et facta sunt;
Saue mon that he made · ymage to him-seluen,
ȝaf him goost of his godhede · and grauntede him blisse,
Lyf that euer schal lasten · and al his lynage aftur.

Syre Worchewel with thyn hand · a wight man of strengthe,
And syre Godfaith Gowel · grete lordes alle.
These fyue ben ysett · for to sauye *Anima*,
Til Kynde come other sende · and kepe hure hym-self.'
'What lyues thyng is Kynde?' quath ich · 'canst thow me telle?'
'Kynde is a creator,' quath Wit · 'of alle kyne thynges,
Fader and formour · of al that forth groweth,
The whiche is god grettest · that gynnynge hadde neuere,
Lord of lyf and of lyght · of lysse and of payne.
Angeles and alle thyng · aren at hus wil;
Man is hym most lyk · of membres and of face,
And semblable in soule to god · bote yf synne hit make.

A. 27. ceatour V. bestis TU; V *has* best; *but see* l. 33. 30. lisse TH_2; blisse VU. 31. arn TUH_2; ben V. **B.** 40. lettres O; lettre LWCRB. 47. his WR; LCOB *om.* **C.** 149. seynde P. 150. canst FMS; can P. 151. a creator MS; creature P.

That is the castel that Kuynde made · *Caro* hit hette,
And is as muche to mene · as mon with a soule,
That he wrouhte with werk · and with word bothe;
Thorw miht of his maieste · mon was i-maket,
Faciamus hominem ad ymaginem et similitudinem nostram.
Inwit and alle wittes · ben closet ther-inne,
For loue of that ladi · that Lyf is i-nempnet;
That is *Anima*, that ouer al · in the bodi wandureth,
But in the herte is hire hom · hiȝest of alle;
Heo is lyf and ledere · and a lemmon of heuene.
Inwit is the help · that *Anima* desyreth;

And that is the castel that Kynde made · *Caro* it hatte,
And is as moche to mene · as man with a soule;
And that he wrouȝt with werke · and with worde bothe,
Thorugh myȝte of the maieste · man was ymaked.

Inwit and alle wittes · closed ben ther-inne,
For loue of the lady *Anima* · that Lyf is ynempned;
Ouer al in mannes body · he walketh and wandreth,
Ac in the herte is hir home · and hir moste reste.
Ac Inwitte is in the hed · and to the herte he loketh,
What *Anima* is lief or loth · he lat hir at his wille;
For after the grace of god · the grettest is Inwitte.
Moche wo worth that man · that mys-reuleth his Inwitte,
And that be glotouns globbares · her god is her wombe;
Quorum deus venter est.
For thei seruen Sathan · her soule shal he haue;
That liueth synful lyf here · her soule is liche the deuel.
And alle that lyuen good lyf · aren like god almiȝti,
Qui manet in caritate, in deo manet, &c.
Allas! that drynke shal for-do · that god dere bouȝte,
And doth god forsaken hem · that he shope to his liknesse;
Amen dico vobis, nescio vos: et alibi: et dimisi eos secundum desideria eorum.

A. 41. *Faciamus—nostram*; from U. 50. is kept TU; he cleþeþ V (*mistake for* he kepeþ); *see* l. 16. 52. iþe siht · and bringeþ V; eiȝe-siȝt · and herynge TH_2; eye to sighte · and herynge U. *In* V, iþe *is probably*

After the grace of god · the gretteste is Inwit.
Inwit in the hed is · and helpeth the soule,
For thorw his connynge he kepeth · *Caro et Anima*
In rule and in reson · bote recheles hit make.
He eggeth the eiȝe-siht · and herynge to goode,
Of good speche and of cunnynge · he is the biginnere,
In monnes brayn he is most · and mihtiest to knowe,
Ther he is bremest · but ȝif blod hit make.
For whonne blod is bremore then brayn · then is Inwit i-bounde,
And eke wantoun and wylde · withouten eny resoun.

And as thow suxt the sonne · som tyme for cloudes
May nat shyne ne shewe · on shawes on erthe,
Right so letteth lecherie · and other luther synnes,
That god suweth nat synful men · and suffreth hem mysfare,
As somme hongen hem-self · and other while a-drencheth;
God wol nat of hem wite · bote leteth hem yworthe,
As the sauter seith · by such synful shrewes,
Et dimisi eos secundum desideria cordis eorum.
Loke! suche luther men · lome ben ryche
Of golde and of other good · ac godes grace hem faileth;
For thei loueth and by-leyueth · al here lyf-tyme
More in catel than in Kynde · that alle kyne thynges wroghte,
The whiche is bothe loue and lyf · and lasteth withouten ende.
Inwitt and alle wittes · closed ben ther-ynne;
By loue and by leaute · ther-by lyueth *Anima*;
And Lyf lyueth by Inwitt · and lerynge of Kynde.
Inwitt is in the hefd · as *Anima* in the herte,
And muche wo worth hym · that Inwitt mys-speyneth.
For that is godes owen good · hus grace and hus tresoure,
That meny lede leeseth · thorw lykerouse drynke,
As Lot dude and Noe; · and *Herodes* the daffe
ȝaf hus douhter for a daunsyng · in a dissh the hefde
Of the blessyde baptiste · by-fore alle hus gustes.
Every man that hath Ynwitt · and hus hele bothe,
Hath tresour ynow in treuthe · to fynde with hym-selue.

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written for iye *or* eiye. C. 164. *desideria* IMFG; *desiderium* P. *cordis* EF; P *om.* 166. *This line is from* IMFSG; PE *omit it.* 173. P *om. 2nd* in. 177. an (*for 2nd* and) P. 178. P *om. 1st* a.

In ȝonge fauntes and fooles · with hem fayleth Inwit,
And eke in sottes thou miht seo · that sitteth atte ale;
Thei heldeth ale in heore hed · til Inwit beo a-dreynt,
And ben brayn-wode as beestes · so heore blod waxeth.
Thenne hath the pouke pouwer · sire *princeps huius mundi*,
Ouer suche maner men · miht in heore soules.
Bote in fauntes ne in fooles · the fend hath no miht
For no werk that thei worchen · wikked or elles;

Foles that fauten Inwitte · I fynde that holicherche
Shulde fynden hem that hem fauteth · and faderelees children;
And wydwes that han nouȝte wher-with · to wynnen hem her fode,
Madde men, and maydenes · that helplees were;
Alle thise lakken Inwitte · and lore bihoueth.
Of this matere I myȝte · make a longe tale,
And fynde fele witnesses · amonges the foure doctours,
And that I lye nouȝt of that I lere the · Luke bereth witnesse.
Godfader and godmoder · that sen her godchildren
At myseise and at mischief · and mowe hem amende,
Shal haue penaunce in purgatorie · but ȝif thei hem helpe.
For more bilongeth to the litel barne · ar he the lawe knowe,
Than nempnyng of a name · and he neuere the wiser!
Shulde no Crystene creature · crien atte ȝate,
Ne faille pâyn ne potage · and prelates did as thei shulden.
A Iuwe wolde nouȝte se a Iuwe · go Iangelyng for defaute,
For alle the moebles on this molde · and he amende it miȝte.
Allas! that a Cristene creature · shal be vnkynde til an other,
Sitthen Iuwes, that we Iugge · Iudas felawes,
Ayther of hem helpeth other · of that that hym nedeth.
Whi nel we Cristene · of Cristes good be as kynde
As Iuwes, that ben owre lores-men? · shame to vs alle!
The comune for her vnkyndenesse · I drede me, shul abye.
Bisschopes shul be blamed · for beggeres sake;
He is worse than Iudas · that ȝiueth a Iaper siluer,
And biddeth the begger go · for his broke clothes:

Proditor est prelatus cum Iuda, qui patrimonium Christi minus distribuit: et alibi:

Perniciosus dispensator est, qui res pauperum Christi inutiliter consumit.

Bote the fadres and the frendes · for fauntes schul be blamet
Bote thei witen hem from wantounesse · whil that thei ben ȝonge.
And ȝif that thei ben pore or catelles · to kepen hem from ille,
Thenne is holy chirche a-signet · to helpen hem and sauen
From folyes, and fynden hem · til that thei ben wysore.
Bote vche wiȝt in this world · that hath wys vnderstondinge,
Is cheef souereyn of him-self · his soule for to ȝeme,
And cheuesschen him from charge · whon he childhode passeth,

Ac fauntekynes and fooles · the whiche fauten Inwitt,
Frendes schulden fynden hem · and fro folye kepe,
And holychurche helpe to · so sholde no man begge,

A. 59. sottes UTH$_2$; wrecches V. 61. ben TU; V *om.* 66. fauntes TU; fautes V. 71. wiȝt T; wight U; mon V. 72. of H$_2$; ouer TU; V *om.* **B.** 67. fauteth RCOB; fauted LW. 83. crestene L. **C.** 183. schulden M; schold S; schal I; schulle G; schul F; suche PE.

Saue him-self from sunne · for so him bi-houeth;
For worche he wel other wrong · the wit is his oune.
Thene is Dowel a duyk · that distruieth vices,
And saueth the soule · that sunne hath no miht
To route ne to reste · ne to rooten in the herte;
And that is drede of god · for Dowel hit maketh,
Hit is biginnynge of goodnesse · god for to drede;
Salamon it seide · for a soth tale,
Innicium sapiencie, timor domini.
For doute, men doth the bet; · Drede is such a mayster
That he maketh men meoke · and mylde of heore speche,
And alle kunne scolers · in scoles forte lerne;
Thenne is Dobet to beo war · for betynge of ȝerdes,
And therof seith the sauter · thi-seluen thou miht reden,
Virga tua et baculus tuus, ipsa me consolata sunt.
Ac ȝif clene consience acorde · that thi-selfe dost wel,
Wilne thou neuere in this world · forte Dobetere;

He doth nouȝt wel that doth thus · ne drat nouȝt god almiȝty,
Ne loueth nouȝt Salamones sawes · that Sapience tauȝte;
Inicium sapiencie, timor domini:
That dredeth god, he doth wel; · that dredeth hym for loue,
And nouȝt for drede of veniaunce · doth ther-fore the bettere;
He doth best, that with-draweth hym · by day and bi nyȝte
To spille any speche · or any space of tyme;
Qui offendit in vno, in omnibus est reus.
Lesyng of tyme · treuthe wote the sothe!
Is moste yhated vp erthe · of hem that beth in heuene,
And sitthe to spille speche · that spyre is of grace,
And goddes gleman · and a game of heuene;
Wolde neuere the faithful fader · his fithel were vntempred,
Ne his gleman a gedelynge · a goer to tauernes!
To alle trew tidy men · that trauaille desyren,
Owre lorde loueth hem and lent · loude other stille,
Grace to go to hem · and agon her lyflode;
Inquirentes autem dominum non minuentur omni bono.

A. 81. *This line is from* T. 86. *et—sunt*; from TU; V om. 87. *This line is from* T; V[1] *has a corrupt line,* Bote clene concience acorde · bote þi-self Dowel. 88. *indicat hominem* TUH$_1$; V *indistinct.* 92. *Qui*

For, *Intencio indicat hominem.*

Bi counseil of Concience · a-cordynge with holy churche,
Loke thou wisse thi wit · and thi werkes aftur;
For ȝif thou comest aȝein Concience · thou cumbrest thiseluen,
And so witnesseth godes word · and holiwrit bothe;
Qui agit contra conscientiam, edificat ad iehennam.
Bote ȝif thow worche bi godus word · I warne the for the beste,
What so men worden of the · wratthe the neuere;
Catoun counseileth so · tak kepe of his teching,
Cum recte viuas, ne cures verba malorum;
Bote suffre and sitte stille · and sech thou no furre,
And beo glad of the grace · that god hath the i-sent;
For ȝif thou cumse to clymbe · and coueyte herre,
Thou miht leose thi louhnesse · for a luitel pruyde.
I haue lerned how lewede men · han lered heore children,
That selden moseth the marbelston · that men ofte treden;
And riht so walkers · that walken a-bouten
From religion to religion · recheles ben thei euere.

Ne spille speche ne tyme · ne myspende neither
Meeble ne vnmeeble · mete nother drynke.
And thanne dude we alle wel · and ȝut wel bet to louye
Oure enemyes entyreliche · and help hem at here neede.
And ȝut were best to bee aboute · and brynge hit to hepe,
That alle londes loueden · and in on lawe by-leouede.
Bisshopes sholde be here-aboute · and brynge this to hepe,
For to leese there-fore here londe · and here lyf after.
The catel that Crist hadde · thre clothes hit were,
Ther-of was he ryfled · and robbed er he deyede;
After that he les hus lyf · for lawe sholde loue wexe.
Prelates and preestes · and princes of holy churche
Sholde doute no deth · nother dere ȝeres,
To wenden as wyde · as the worlde were,
To tulien the erthe with tonge · and teche men to louye;
For ho so loueth, leyue hit wel · god wol nat lete hym sterue
In myschef for lacke of mete · ne for myssynge of clothes;
Inquirentes autem dominum non minuentur omni bono.

—*iehennam*; from U. 95. kepe UTH$_2$; hede V. **B.** 97. *vno* WCOB; *verbo* LR; *see* B. xi. 301. **C.** 190. loueden IMFE; lyueden P. an (*for* and) P. 194. he IMFEG; P *om.* ryflede P. 199. eerthe P.

And men that cunne mony craftes · clergie hit telleth,
Thruft or theodam with hem · selden is i-seye;
Qui circuit omne genus, nullius est generis.
Poul the apostel · in his pistel wrot
In ensaumple of suche · rennars a-boute,
And for wisdam is writen · as witnesseth clerkes,
In ea vocacione qua vocati estis, in eadem permaneatis.
ȝif thou beo mon i-mariet · monk, othur chanoun,
Hold the stable and studefast · and strengthe thi-seluen
To beo blesset for thi beryng · ȝe, beggere thauh thou weore!
Loke thou grucche not on god · thauȝ he the ȝeue luytel,
Beo payed with thi porcion · porore or ricchore.
Thus in drede lyth Dowel · and Dobet to soffren,
For thorw soffraunce seo thou miht · hou souereynes ariseth;
Qui se humiliat, exaltabitur, &c.;
And so lerede vs Luc · that lyȝede neuere.
And thus of drede and his dede · Dobest aryseth,
Whuch is flour and fruit · i-fostred of bothe.
Riht as the rose · that red is and swote,
Out of a ragged roote · and of rouwe breres
Springeth and spredeth · that spicers desyreth.
Or as whete out of a weod · waxeth vppon eorthe,
So Dobest out of Dowel · and Dobet doth springe

Trewe wedded libbing folk · in this worlde is Dowel;
For thei mote worche and wynne · and the worlde susteyne.
For of her kynde thei come · that confessoures ben nempned,
Kynges and kniȝtes · kayseres and cherles,
Maydenes and martires · out of o man come.
The wyf was made the weye · for to help worche,
And thus was wedloke ywrouȝt · with a mene persone;
First bi the faderes wille · and the frendes conseille,
And sytthenes bi assent of hem-self · as thei two myȝte acorde.
And thus was wedloke ywrouȝt · and god hym-self it made;
In erthe the heuene is · hym-self was the witnesse.
Ac fals folke faithlees · theues and lieres,
Wastoures and wrecches · out of wedloke, I trowe,
Conceyued ben in yuel tyme · as Caym was on Eue.
Of such synful shrewes · the sauter maketh mynde,
Concepit in dolore, et peperit iniquitatem, &c.:

A-mong men of this molde · that meke ben, or kuynde;
For loue of heore louhnesse · vr lord ȝiueth hem grace
Such werkes to worche · that he is with apayet.
Furst and foreward · to folk that ben i-weddet,
And libbeth as heore lawe wole · hit liketh God almihti;
For thorw wedlac the world stont · hose wol hit i-knowe.
Thei ben ricchest in reame · and the rote of Dowel;
For of heore kuynde thei come · that confessours beth nempned,
Bothe maydens and martires · monkes and ancres,
Kynges and knihtes · and alle cunne clerkes,
Barouns and burgeis · and bonde men of tounes.
Fals folk and feithles · theoues and lyȝers
Ben conseyuet in curset tyme · as Caym was on Eue,
After that Adam and Eue · hedden eten of the appel
Aȝeyn the heste of him · that hem of nouȝt made.
An angel in haste · thennes hem tornde
In-to this wrecchede world · to wonen and to libben
In tene and in trauaile · to here lyues ende;
In that corsede constellacion · thei knewen to-gedere,
And brouȝten forth a barn · that muche bale wrouȝte.
Caym men cleped him · in cursed tyme engendret,
And so seith the sauter · seo hit whon the liketh,
Concepit in dolore, et peperit iniquitatem, &c.

Ho so lyueth in lawe · and in loue doth wel
As these weddid men · that this worlde susteynen?
For of here kynde thei come · confessours and martyres,
Patriarkes and prophetes · popes and maidenes.
For god seith hit hym-self · "shal neuere good appel
Thorw no sotel science · on sour stock growe;"
And hit ys no more to mene · bote men that buth bygetyn
Out of matrimonie nat moillere · mowe nat haue the grace
That leelle legitime · by lawe may cleyme.
And that my sawe be soth · the sauter bereth witnesse,
Concepit in dolore, et peperit iniquitatem.

A. 105. *nullius—generis* U; V *om.* 108. *In—permaneatis* U; V *om.* 115. souereyn V; souereynes TU. *exaltabitur, &c.* is from T. 124. molde TU; world V. 132. an (*for* and) V. 141. *This line is from* U. 143. a barn TU; barnes V. wrouȝte TU; wrouȝten V; *cf. next line.* 145. *et—&c.* from T. **C.** 203. theese P. 204. martyres MIFSG; maistres PE. 205. maidones P. *After l.* 207, S *adds*: Nothur an a bytur brom · wex broune beryus.

And alle that come of that Caym · Crist hem hatede aftur,
And mony milions mo · of men and of wymmen
That of Seth and his suster · seththen forth coome;
For thei marieden to corsed men · that comen of Caymes kuynde.
For alle that comen of that Caym · a-cursed thei weren,
And alle that couplede hem to that kun · Crist hem hatede dedliche.
Forthi he sende to Seth · and seide him bi an angel,
To kepe his cun from Caymes · that thei coupled not to-gedere.
And seththen Seth and his suster sed · weren spoused to Caymes,
A-ȝeyn godes heste · gurles thei geeten,
That god was wroth with heor werk · and suche wordes seide,
Penitet me fecisse hominem;
And is thus muche to mene · a-monges ȝou alle,
"That I makede mon · nou hit me for-thinketh;"

And alle that come of that Caym · come to yuel ende.
For God sent to Seem · and seyde bi an angel,* [*Cf. p. 279.]
"Thyne issue in thyne issue · I wil that thei be wedded,
And nouȝt thi kynde with Caymes · ycoupled ne yspoused."
ȝet some, aȝein the sonde · of owre saueoure of heuene,
Caymes kynde and his kynde · coupled togideres,
Tyl god wratthed for her werkis · and suche a worde seyde,
"That I maked man · now it me athynketh;"
Penitet me fecisse hominem.
And come to Noe anon · and bad hym nouȝt lette:
"Swithe go shape a shippe · of shides and of bordes.
Thi-self and thi sones three . and sithen ȝowre wyues,
Buske ȝow to that bote · and bideth ȝe ther-inne,
Tyl fourty dayes be fulfilde · that the flode haue ywasshen
Clene awey the cursed blode · that Caym hath ymaked.
Bestes that now ben · shulle banne the tyme,
That euere that cursed Caym · come on this erthe;
Alle shal deye for his dedes · bi dales and bi hulles,
And the foules that fleeghen · forth with other bestes,
Excepte oneliche · of eche kynde a couple,
That in thi shyngled shippe · shul ben ysaued."

A. 152. Seth; V *has* Sem, *by mistake*; *see* l. 148. 154. Seth; Sem VT; *see* ll. 148, 152. 156. *fecisse—hominem*; from TU; V *om.* 163. þat; TH_2 *have* þat, *but omit* þe. 165. banne TUH_2; curse V. **B.** 134. þe W;

And com to Noe anon · and bad him not lette
Swithe to schapen a schup · of schides and bordes;
Him-self and his sones thre · and seththen heore wyues,
Bringen hem to the bot · and byden ther-inne,
Til fourti dawes ben folfuld · that the flod haue i-wassche
Clene awey the cursede blod · that Caym hath i-maket.
"Beestes that now ben · mouwen banne the tyme
That euere that cursede Caym · com vppon eorthe;
Alle schulen dye for his dedes · bi dounes and hulles,
Bothe fisch and foules · forth with other beestes,
Out-taken eihte soules · and of vche beest a couple,
That in the schynglede schup · schullen ben i-saued;
Elles schal al dye · and to helle weende."

Caym the cursed creature · conceyued was in synne,
After that Adam and Eue · hadden ysynged;
With-oute repentaunce · of here rechelesnesse,
A rybaud thei engendrede · and a gome vnryghtful.
As an hewe that ereth nat · auntreth hym to sowe
On a leye-lond · a-ȝens hus lordes wille,
So was Caym conceyued · and so been cursed wrecches,
That lycame han a-ȝen the lawe · that oure lorde ordeynede.
Alle that come of Caym · caytyues were euere,
And for the synne of Caymes sed · seyde god to Noe,
Penitet me fecisse hominem;
And bad shape hym a schip · of shides and of bordes,
"Thy-selue and thy sones three · and sitthen ȝoure wyues,
Buske ȝow to that bot · and a-bydeth ther-ynne
Tyl fourty dayes be fulfilled · and the flod haue wasshe
Clene away the cursede blod · that of Cayme ys spronge.
Bestes that now beeth · banne shulleth the tyme
That euere that cursed Cayme · cam on this erthe;
Alle shullen deye for hus dedes · by dales and hulles,
And the foules that flen · forth with othere bestes,
Except onliche · of eche kynde a peyre,
That in thy shynglede schip · with the shal be saued."

LCROB *om.* 139. forth CWROB; for L. C. 214. rechilessnesse P. 216. hewe IG; hywe P. 222. schip IMFSG; shup P. 224. and IMF; P *om.* 225. þe M; PEIFSG *om.* 232. schip MFS; shup P.

Thus thorw cursede Caym · com care vppon alle;
For Seth and his suster children · spouseden either other,
Aȝeyn the lawe of vr lord · lyȝen to-gedere,
And weoren maried at mischef · as men doth now heore children.

Here aboutȝte the barne · the belsyres gultes,
And alle for her forfadres · thei ferden the worse.
The gospel is here-ageine · in o degre, I fynde,
Filius non portabit iniquitatem patris, et pater non portabit iniquitatem filii, &c.

Ac I fynde, if the fader · be false and a shrewe,
That somdel the sone · shal haue the sires tacches.
Impe on an ellerne · and if thine apple be swete,
Mochel merueile me thynketh · and more of a schrewe,
That bryngeth forth any barne · but if he be the same,
And haue a sauoure after the sire · selde seestow other;
Numquam colligimus de spinis vuas, nec de tribulis fycus.
And thus thourw cursed Caym · cam care vppon erthe;
And al for thei wrouȝt wedlokes · aȝein goddis wille.
For-thi haue thei maugre for here mariages · that marye so her childeren;
For some, as I se now · soth for to telle,
For coueitise of catel · vnkyndeliche ben wedded.
As careful concepcioun · cometh of suche mariages,
As bifel of the folke · that I bifore of tolde.
For goode shulde wedde goode · though hij no good hadde;
"I am *via et veritas*," seith Cryst · "I may auaunce alle."
It is an oncomely couple · bi Cryst, as me thinketh,
To ȝyuen a ȝonge wenche · to an olde feble,
Or wedden any widwe · for welth of hir goodis,
That neuere shal barne bere · but if it be in armes!

A. 173. Seth; Sem VT; *see* l. 148. **B.** 142. aboutȝte WCRB; aboutȝt L. 150. *colligimus* COB; *colligitur* LWR. **C.** 233. aboute P. 235. *importabit* P. *nec—filij*; *in* M *only*. 238. fore P. (*1st*) þe EMFSG; P *om.* 248. engendrede P. 256. now EMIFS; P *om.* 257. chapman P.

For summe, as I seo nou · soth for to tellen,
For couetise of catel · vnkuyndeliche beoth maried,
And careful concepcion · cometh of such weddyng,
Also bifel of that folk · that I beo-fore schewede.
Hit is an vn-comely couple · be Cryst, as me thinketh,
To ȝeuen a ȝong wenche · to an old feble mon,
Or to wedden an old widewe · for weolthe of hire goodes,
That neuer schal child bere · bote hit beo in hire armes!

Here abouȝte the barn · hus belsires gultes,
And alle for here for-fadres · ferden the worse.
The godspel ys her-ageyn · as gomes may reden,
Filius non portabit iniquitatem patris, nec pater iniquitatem filij.
Holy writ wittnesseth · that for no wickede dede
That the sire hym-self doth · by hus owene wil,
The sone for the syres synne · sholde nat be the werse.
West-mynster lawe, ich wot wel · worcheth the contrarie;
For thauh the fader be a frankelayne · and for a felon be hanged,
The heritage that the air sholde haue · ys at the kynges wille.
Ac the godspel ys a glose there · hudynge the greythe treuthe;
For god seide ensample · of suche manere isshue,
That kynde folweth kynde · and contrarieth neuere;
Nunquam colligunt de spinis vuas: et alibi, Bona arbor bonum fructum facit.
Ac whi the worlde was a-drent · holy writ telleth,
Was for mariages of man-kynde · that men maden that tyme.
After that Caym the cursede · hadde culled Abel,
Seth, Adames sone · sitthen was engendred.
And god sente to Seth · so sone he was of age,* [*Cf. p. 276.]
That—for no kyne catel · ne no kyne byheste
Suffren hus seed seeden · with Caymes seed hus brother.
And for that Seth suffrede hit · god seide, "me forthynketh
That ich man made · othere matrimonye suffrede;
For good sholde wedden good · thauh thei no good hadde,
For ich am *uia et ueritas* · and may auaunce hem alle."
Ac fewe folke now folweth this · for thei ȝeueth here children
For couetise of catel · and connynge chapmen;
Of kyn ne of kynredene · a-counteth men bote lytel.

In Ielesye Ioyeles · and Ianglynge in bedde
Mony peire seththen the pestilence · han pliht hem to-gedere;
The fruit that thei bringen forth · ben mony foule wordes,
Han thei none children bote chestes · and choppes hem bitwene.
Thauȝ thei don hem to Donmowe · but the deuel helpe
To folewen aftur the flucchen · fecche thei hit neuere;

Many a peire sithen the pestilence · han pliȝt hem togideres;
The fruit that thei brynge forth · aren foule wordes,
In Ialousye Ioyeles · and Ianglyng on bedde.
Haue thei no children but cheste · and choppyng hem bitwene.
And though thei don hem to Donmowe · but if the deuel help
To folwen after the flicche · fecche thei it neuere;
And but thei bothe be forsworne · that bacoun thei tyne.
For-thi I conseille alle Crystene · coueite nouȝt be wedded
For coueitise of catel · ne of kynrede riche.
Ac maydenes and maydenes · macche ȝow togideres,
Widwes and widwers · worcheth the same.
For no londes, but for loue · loke ȝe be wedded,
And thanne gete ȝe the grace of god · and good ynogh to lyue with.
And euery maner seculer · that may nouȝt continue,
Wysly go wedde · and war hym fro synne;
For leccherye in likyng · is lymeȝerde of helle.
Whiles thow art ȝonge · and thi wepne kene,
Wreke the with wyuynge · ȝif thow wilt ben excused.
Dum sis vir fortis · ne des tua robora scortis,
Scribitur in portis · meretrix est ianua mortis.

A. 188. donmowe—helpe, *from* U; V *has* done · al þat þei mowen; *where* done *and* mowen *are corrupted from* donmowe. 190. that—tyne TUH$_2$; and cursen that tyme V. 193. maidenis · macche ȝow ysamme T; V *has* vnmaydens · clene ow save. 194. werchiþ riȝt T; V *has* worschupeþ. **B.** 167. an (*for* and) L. 181. wilt O; wolt WCB; wil L. **C.** 260. ymanerede P. yspronge EIMFSG; spronge P. 269. watel PE; walet IMF. 271. *This line is in* F *only.* 273. lelly SMG; sothliche PE. 281. maidones P. 283. noobles P. 287. ert P.

Bote ȝif thei bothe ben forswore · that bacoun thei tyne.
Forthi I counseile alle Cristene · coueite not ben i-weddet
For couetyse of catel · ne of kun riche;
Bote maydens and maydens · maccheth ou ysamme,
Widewers and widewes · wercheth riȝt also,
And thenne glade ȝe god · that alle goodes sendeth!

Thauh hue be loueliche to loken on · and lofsom a bedde,
A mayde wel ymanered · of good men yspronge,
Bote hue haue eny other good · haue hure wol no ryche.
Ac let hure be vnloueliche · vnlofsom a bedde,
A bastarde, a bounde on · a begeneldes douhter,
That no curtesye can · bote let hure be knowe
For ryche other wel yrented · thauh hue reuely for elde,
Ther nys squier ne knyght · in contreye a-boute,
That he nel bowe to that bonde · to bede hure an hosebonde,
And wedden hure for hure welthe · and wisshen on the morwe
That hus wyf were wex · other a watel-ful of nobles.
In gelesie Ioye-less · and Ianglynge a bedde
Thei lyue here lif vnlouely · til deth hem departe.
Meny peire sitthe the pestilence-tyme · han plight treuthe to louye,
Ac thei lyen lelly · here nother loueth othere.
The frut that thei bryngen forth · aren meny foule wordes;
Thei han no children bote cheste · and choppes hem by-twyne.
Thauh thei don hem to Donemowe · bote the deuel hem helpe
To folwen for the flicche · feccheth thei hit neuere;
Bote thei bothe be for-swore · that bacon thei tyne.
For-thi ich counseile alle Crystine · coueite neuere be wedded
For couetise of catel · in no kynne wyse;
Bote maydenes and maydenes · marieth ȝow to-gederes;
And wydewers and wydewes · weddeth ayther othere,
And loke that loue be more the cause · than lond other nobles.
And euerech manere seculer man · that may nat contynue,
Wisliche go wedde · and war the fro that synne
That lecherye is, a lykynge thyng · and lym-ȝerde of helle.
And whil thow art ȝong and ȝep · and thy wepne kene,
Awreke the therwith on wyuynge · for godes werk ich holde hit:
Dum sis uir fortis · ne des tua robora scortis,
Scribitur in portis · meretrix est ianua mortis.

For in vn-tyme treweli · bi-twene mon and wommon
Schulde no bed-bourde be · bote bothe weore clene
Of lyf and eke in loue · and in lawe alse.
That deede derne · do no mon scholde,
As is vset, bi-twene · sengle and sengle;
Seththen lawe hath i-loket · that vche mon haue a make
In mariage and matrimoyne · i-medlet to-gedere,
And worche that with his wyf · and with no wommon elles.
That other-gates ben i-geten · for gadelynges ben holden,

Whan ȝe haue wyued, bewar · and worcheth in tyme;
Nouȝt as Adam and Eue · whan Caym was engendred.
For in vntyme, trewli · bitwene man and womman,
Ne shulde no bourde on bedde be; · but-if thei bothe were clene
Bothe of lyf and of soule · and in parfyte charitee,
That ilke derne dede · do noman ne sholde.
And if thei leden thus her lyf · it liketh god almiȝti;
For he made wedloke firste · and him-self it seide;
Bonum est vt vnusquisque vxorem suam habeat, propter fornicacionem.
And thei that othergatis ben geten · for gedelynges ben holden,
As false folke fondelynges · faitoures and lyars;
Vngracious to gete goode · or loue of the poeple,
Wandren and wasten · what thei cacche mowe.
Aȝeines Dowel thei don yuel · and the deuel serue,
And after her deth-day · shulle dwelle with the same,
But god gyue hem grace here · hem-self to amende.
Dowel, my frende, is · to don as lawe techeth,
To loue thi frende and thi foo · leue me, that is Dobet.
To ȝiuen and to ȝemen · bothe ȝonge and olde,
To helen and to helpen · is Dobest of alle.
And Dowel is to drede god · and Dobet to suffre,
And so cometh Dobest of bothe · and bryngeth adoun the mody,
And that is wikked Wille · that many werke shendeth,
And dryueth away Dowel · thorugh dedliche synnes.'

A. 204, 205. V *has only one line*, þat oþergates ben I-geten · ben fyndlynges and lyȝers; *I here follow* TUH$_2$. 213. werke H$_2$T; men V. **B.** 190.

That ben false folke and false heires · fyndlynges and lyȝers,
Vn-gracios to gete loue · or eni good elles,
Bote wandren as wolues · and wasten ȝif thei mouwen.
A-ȝeyn Dowel thei don vuele · and the deuel plesen,
And aftur heore deth-day · schul dwelle with the schrewe,
Bute god ȝiue hem grace · heer to a-mende.
Thenne is Dowel to dredren · and Dobet to suffren,
And so cometh Dobest aboute · and bringeth a-doun modi,
And that is wikkede Wil · that mony werke schendeth.'

ȝe that han wyues, beth war · worcheth nat out of tyme,
As Adam dude and Eue · as ich whil er tolde.

For sholde no bed-borde be · bote-yf thei bothe were

Clene of lyf and loue in saule · and in leel wedlok.
For that derne dede · do no man sholde
Bote wedded men with here wyues · as holy writ telleth;

Bonum est ut unusquisque uxorem suam habeat, propter fornicacionem.

That othere-gates been gete · for gadelynges aren holde,
And fals folke and foundlynges · faitours and lyers,
Vngraciouse to gete good · othere good loue of puple,
A-waytynge and wastynge · al that thei cacche mowe;
A-ȝens Dowel thei don vuele · and the deuel seruen,
And after here deth-daye · dwellen shulle in helle,
Bote god gyue hem grace · her goynge to amende.
And thus ys Dowel, my frend · to do as lawe techeth,
To louye and to lowe the · and no lyf to greue.
Ac to louye and to lene · leyf me, that is Dobet;
Ac to ȝeue and to ȝeme · bothe ȝonge and olde,
Helen and helpen · is Dobest of all.
For the more a man may do · by so that he do hit,
The more is he worth and worthi · of wyse and goode ypreised.'

Hic explicit passus primus de Dowel.

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likeþ WOB; liked LR. C. 291. beþ IMESG; ben P. 303. hem IMFG; P *om.* 304. do IMSEG; day (*wrongly*) P. 309. Fore P.

PASSUS XI.

Passus secundus de Dowel, &c.

THENNE hedde Wit a wyf · was hoten dam Studie,
That lene was of lich · and of louh chere.
Heo was wonderliche wroth · that Wit me thus tauhte,
And al starinde dam Studie · steorneliche seide,
'Wel artou witti,' quod heo · 'wisdom to telle
To fayturs or to fooles · that frentik ben of wittes!'
And blamede him for his beere · and bad him beo stille

PASSUS X.

Passus decimus de visione, et secundus de Dowel.

THANNE hadde Witte a wyf · was hote dame Studye,
That lene was of lere · and of liche bothe.
She was wonderly wroth · that Witte me thus tauȝte,
And al starynge dame Studye · sternelich seyde,
'Wel artow wyse,' quod she to Witte · 'any wysdomes to telle
To flatereres or to folis · that frantyk ben of wittes!'
And blamed hym and banned hym · and badde hym be stylle,
With suche wise wordes · to wissen any sottes;
And seyde, '*noli mittere*, man · margerye-perlis
Amanges hogges, that han · hawes at wille.
Thei don but dryuele ther-on · draffe were hem leuere
Than al the precious perre · that in paradys wexeth.
I sey it bi suche,' quod she · 'that sheweth bi her werkes,
That hem were leuer londe · and lordship on erthe,
Or ricchesse or rentis · and reste at her wille,
Than alle the sothe sawes · that Salamon seyde euere.
Wisdome and witte now · is nouȝt worth a carse,
But if it be carded with coueytise · as clotheres kemben here wolle.
Who-so can contreue deceytes · and conspire wronges,
And lede forth a loue-day · to latte with treuthe;

A. 2. lene—lich TH_2; euer was i-liche V. 18. cardit TH_2; carket V.

With suche wyse wordes · to wisse eny fooles.
And seide, '*noli mittere* · margeri-perles
Among hogges that han · hawes at heore wille;
Thei don bot drauele theron · draf weore hem leuere
Then al the presciouse peerles · that in paradys waxen.
I sigge hit bi thulke,' quod heo · 'that bi heore werkes schewen
That hem weore leuere lond · and lordschupe on eorthe,
Richesse, rentes · or reste at heore wille
Then al the soth sawes · that Salamon seide euere.
Wisdam and wit nou · is not worth a russche
But hit beo cardet with couetise · as clothers doth heor wolle,
That conterfeteth disseites · and conspiret wronges,
And ledeth forth a loueday · to lette the trewthe;

PASSUS XII.

Incipit passus secundus de Dowel.

THENNE hadde Wit a wif · was hote dame Studie,
That ful lene lokede · and lif-holy semede;
Hue was wonderliche worth · that Wit so me tauhte.
Al starynge dame Studie · sterneliche seide,
'Wel art thow wys,' quath hue to Wit · 'suche wisdome to shewe
To eny fol other flaterere · other to frentik puple;'
And seide, '*nolite mittere*, ȝe men · margerie-perles
A-monge hogges that hauen · hawes at wille;
Thei don bote dreuele theron · draf were hem leuere
Than al the preciouse perreye · that eny prince weldeth.
Ich segge hit by suche,' quath Studie · 'that shewen by here werkus,
Thei loueth lond and lordshup · and lykyng of body more
Than holynesse other hendenesse · other al that seintes techeth.
Wysdom and wit now · is nat worth a carse
Bote hit be carded with couetyse · as clothers kemben wolle.
Ho that can contreeue and caste · to deceyue the puple,
And lette with a loueday · treuthe, and by-gyle hym,

20. trewethe V. **B.** 19. an (*for* and) L. **C.** 4. staryenge P. sturneliche P. 5. (*2nd*) to IMFSEG; P *om.* 9. dreuelyn P. 12. Thei M; That PEIFSK.

That suche craftes cunnen · to counseil beoth i-clept,
And ben serued as syres · that serueth the deuel.
Iob the Ientel · in his Ieestes seide,
Quare via impiorum prosperatur, bene est omnibus qui praue et inique agunt?
Ac he that holy writ hath · euer in his mouthe,

He that suche craftes can · to conseille is clepid;
Thei lede lordes with lesynges · and bilyeth treuthe.
Iob the gentel · in his gestes witnesseth,
That wikked men, thei welden · the welthe of this worlde,
And that thei ben lordes of eche a londe · that oute of lawe libbeth;
Quare impij viuunt? bene est omnibus, qui preuaricantur et inique agunt?
The sauter seyth the same · bi suche that don ille,
Ecce ipsi peccatores habundantes; in seculo optinuerunt diuicias.
"Lo!" seith holy letterrure · "whiche lordes beth this shrewes!"
Thilke that god moste gyueth · leste good thei deleth,
And moste vnkynde to the comune · that moste catel weldeth;
Que perfecisti, destruxerunt; iustus autem quid fecit?
Harlotes for her harlotrye · may haue of her godis,
And Iaperes and Iogeloures · and Iangelers of gestes.
Ac he that hath holy writte · ay in his mouth,
And can telle of Tobye · and of the twelue apostles,
Or prechen of the penaunce · that Pilat wrou3t
To Iesu the gentil · that Iewes to-drowe:—
Litel is he loued · that suche a lessoun scheweth,
Or daunted or drawe forth · I do it on god hym-self!
But tho that feynen hem folis · and with faityng libbeth,
A3ein the lawe of owre lorde · and lyen on hem-selue,
Spitten and spewen · and speke foule wordes,
Drynken and dryuelen · and do men for to gape,
Lickne men and lye on hem · that leneth hem no 3iftes,
Thei conne namore mynstralcye · ne musyke, men to glade,
Than Munde the mylnere · of *multa fecit deus!*

B. 30. All the MSS. omit *quid fecit.*

And con tellen of Tobie · and the twelue apostles;
And prechen of the peuaunce · that Pilatus wrouhte
To Iesu the Ientil · that Iewes to-drowe
On cros vppon Caluarie · as clerkes vs telleth;—
Luytel is he loued or leten bi · that such a lessun redeth,
Or daunseled or drawen forth · this disours witen the sothe;

That can coueite and caste thus · aren cleped in-to counsail.
Qui sapiunt nugas · et crimina lege uocantur,
Qui recte sapiunt · lex iubet ire foras.
He is reuerenced and robed · that can robbe the peuple
Thorw fallas and false questes · and thorw fykel speche.
Iob the gentil and wys · in hus gestes wytnesseth
What shal worthe of suche · whenne thei lyf leten;
Ducunt in bonis dies suos, & in fine descendunt ad infernum.
The sauter seith the same · of alle suche ryche;
Ibunt in progenies patrum suorum, & usque in eternum non uidebunt lumen:
Et alibi: Ecce ipsi peccatores, & cet.
"Lo!" holy lettrure seith · "whiche lordes been these shrewes!"
Tho that god most good gyueth · most greue ryght and treuthe:
Que perfecisti, destruxerunt; iustus autem quid fecit?
And harlotes for hure harlotrie · aren holpen er nedy poure;
And that is no ryght ne reson · for rather men sholde
Help hem that hath nouht · than tho that han no neede.
Ac he that hath holy writ · aye in hus mouthe,
And can telle of Treuthe · and of the twelue apostels,
Other of the passion of Crist · other of purgatorie peynes,
Lytel is he a-lowed there-fore · among lordes at festes.

C. 18. coueite MEKG; coueyty P. 25. *progenies* EIF; *progenie* P. 26. thees P. 27. god IMFSKG; PE *om.* *iustus—fecit*; *in* S *only*. 28. hure S; here IKG; P *om.* nudy P. 34. at IMFG; of P.

For ȝif harlotrie ne holpe hem the bet · (haue god my soule!)
More then musyk · or makyng of Crist,
Wolde neuer kyng ne kniht · ne canoun of seynt Poules
ȝeuen hem to heore ȝeres-ȝiue · the value of a grote!
Bote munstralsye and murthe · a-mong men is nouthe;
Lecherie and losengrie · and loseles tales,
And geten gold with grete othes · beoth gamus nou a dayes.
But ȝif thei carpen of Crist · (this clerkes and this lewede)
Atte mete in heor murthe · whon munstrals beoth stille,
Thenne telleth thei of the trinite · hou two slowen the thridde,
And bringeth forth ballede resouns · tak Bernard to witnesse,
And puyteth forth presumpciun · to preue the sothe.
Thus thei drauelen on heore deys · the deite to knowe,
And demeth god in-to the gorge · whon heore gottus follen.

Ne were here vyle harlotrye · haue god my treuthe,
Shulde neuere kyng ne knizt · ne chanoun of seynt Poules
ȝyue hem to her ȝeresȝiue · the ȝifte of a grote!
Ac murthe and mynstralcye · amonges men is nouthe
Leccherye, losengerye · and loseles tales;
Glotonye and grete othes · this murthe thei louieth.
Ac if thei carpen of Cryst · this clerkis and this lewed,
Atte mete in her murthes . whan mynstralles ben stille,
Thanne telleth thei of the trinite · a tale other tweyne,
And bringen forth a balled resoun · and taken Bernard to witnesse,
And putten forth a presumpsioun · to preue the sothe.
Thus thei dryuele at her deyse · the deite to knowe,
And gnawen god with the gorge · whan her gutte is fulle.
Ac the careful may crye · and carpen atte ȝate,
Bothe afyngred and a-thurst · and for chele quake;
Is none to nymen hym nere · his noye to amende,
But hoen on hym as an hounde · and hoten hym go thennes.
Litel loueth he that lorde · that lent hym al that blisse,
That thus parteth with the pore · a parcel whan hym nedeth.
Ne were mercy in mene men · more than in riche,
Mendinantz meteles · mizte go to bedde.
God is moche in the gorge · of thise grete maystres,
Ac amonges mene men · his mercy and his werkis;
And so seith the sauter · I haue yseye it ofte,

Ecce audiuimus eam in Effrata, inuenimus eam in campis silue.

But carful mon may crien · and clepen atte ȝate
Bothe of hungur and of thurst · and for chele quake;
Nis no mon him neih · his nuy to amende,
Bote honesschen him as an hound · and hoten him go thennes!
Luyte loueth he that lord · that leneth him that blisse,
That thus parteth with the pore · a parcel whon him neodeth.
Neore merci in mene men · more then in riche,
With mony defauti meeles · mihte thei go to bedde.
God is muche in the gorge · of theose grete maystres,
Bote a-mong mene men · his merci and his werkes;
And so seith the psauter · sech hit in '*Memento*,'

Ecce audiuimus eam in Effrata, inuenimus eam in campis silue.

Now is the manere atte mete · when mynstralles ben stylle,
The lewede a-ȝens the lered · the holy lore to dispute,
And tellen of the trinite · how two slowe the thridde,
And brynge forth ballede resones · and taken Bernarde to witnesse,
And putteth forth presompcions · to preouen the sothe.
Thus thei dreuelen atte deyes · the deyte to knowe,
And gnawen god with gorge · when here guttes fullen.
Ac the carful mai crie · and quaken atte ȝate,
Bothe a-fyngred and a-furst · and for defaute spille,
Ys non so hende to haue hym yn · bote hote hym go ther god is!
Thenne semeth hit to my syght · to suche as so biddeth,
God is nat in that hom · ne hus help neither!
Lytel loueth he that lorde · that lente hym al that blisse,
That so parteth with the poure · a parcel, whenne hym nedeth.
Ne were mercy in mene men · more than in ryght ryche,
Meny time mendynans · myghte gon a-fyngred;
And so seith the sauter · ich sauh hit in *Memento*,

Ecce audiuimus eam (*i. caritatem*) *in Effrata; inuenimus eam in campis silue.*

A. 55. *eam* TUH$_2$; *eum* V. C. 35. atte þe P · 47. al IMFSEKG; P *om.*

Clerkes and kete men · carpen of god ofte,
And han him muche in heore mouth · bote mene men in herte.

Clerkes and other kynnes men · carpen of god faste,
And haue hym moche in the mouthe · ac mene men in herte.

Freres and faitoures · han founde suche questiouns
To plese with proude men · sithen the pestilence tyme,
And prechen at seint Poules · for pure enuye of clerkis,
That folke is nou3te fermed in the feith · ne fre of her goodes,
Ne sori for her synnes · so is pryde waxen
In religioun and in alle the rewme · amonges riche and pore,
That preyeres haue no power · the pestilence to lette.

And 3ette the wrecches of this worlde · is none ywar bi other,
Ne for drede of the deth · withdrawe nou3t her pryde,
Ne beth plentyuous to the pore · as pure charite wolde,
But in gaynesse and in glotonye · for-glotten her goode hem-selue,
And breken nou3te to the beggar · as the boke techeth,
Frange esurienti panem tuum, &c.

And the more he wynneth and welt · welthes and ricchesse,
And lordeth in londes · the lasse good he deleth.
Thobye telleth 3ow nou3t so · take hede, 3e riche,
How the boke bible · of hym bereth witnesse:
Si tibi sit copia, habundanter tribue; si autem exiguum, illud impertiri stude libenter:—
Who-so hath moche, spene manliche · so meneth Thobie,
And who-so litel weldeth · reule him ther-after;

B. 70. hym WCROB; L *om.* **C.** 55, 60. pestelences P. 56. *This line is from* IKGSF; *not in* PEM. 58. pryuyde P. 60. thees P. 62. deþe IMFSEK; dyþe P. 63. þees P. ywar IK; whar P. 67. *Frange—tuam* E; *not in* P. 73. laste P. 80. *This line is in* I *only.* 83. lust MFSK; loust P.

Freres and faytors · han founden suche questions
To plese with this proude men · seththe pestilence tyme;

Clerkus and knyghtes · carpen of god ofte,
And haueth hym muche in hure mouthe · ac mene men in herte.
Freres and faitours · han founde vp suche questiones
To plese with proute men · sitthe the pestilences,
And preching at seint Poules · in pure enuye of clerkes,
That folk is nouht ferm in the feith · ne free of here goodes,
Ne sory for here synnes; · so is pruyde en-hansed
In religion and al the reame · among ryche and poure,
That preyeres han no power · these pestilences to lette.
For god is def now a dayes · and deyneth nouht ous to huyre,
And good men for oure gultes · he al to-grynt to dethe;
And ȝut these wrecches of thys worlde · is non y-war by other,
Ne for drede of eny deth · with-draweth hem fro pruyde,
Ne parteth with the poure · as pure charyte wolde,
Bote in gayenesse and in glotenye · for-glotten here goodes,
And breketh nat here bred to the poure · as the book hoteth;
Frange esurienti panem tuum; et egenos vagosque induc in domum tuam.
Ac the more he hath, and wynneth · the world at hus wylle,
And lordeth in leedes · the lasse good he deleth.
Tobie tauhte nat so · taketh hede, ȝe ryche,
How he tolde in a tyme · and tauhte hus sone dele:
Si tibi sit copia, abundanter tribue: si autem exiguum, illud impertiri libenter stude.
And this is no more to mene · bote "ho so muche good weldeth,
Be large ther-of while hit last · to leedes that been needy.
Yf thow haue lytel, leue sone · loke by thy lyue
Get the loue ther-with · thauh thou fare the werse."
Ac lust no lord ne lewed man · of suche lore nou to hure,
Bote lythen how they myghte lerne · lest good to spene.
And so lyuen lordes now · and leten hit a Dowel;
For is no wit worth now · bote hit of wynnynge soune,
And capped with clergie · to conspire wronge.
For-thi,' quath hue to Wit, 'be war · holy writ to shewe
Amonges hem that hauen · hawes atte wille,
The whiche is a lykynge and a lust · and loue of the worlde.'

Thei de-foulen vre fey · at festes ther thei sitten.
For nou is vche boye bold · brothel and other,
To talken of the trinite · to beon holden a syre,
And fyndeth forth fantasyes · vr feith to apeyre;
And eke de-fameth the fader · that vs alle made,
And craken aȝeyn the clergie · crabbede wordes.
"Whi wolde god vr saueour · suffre such a worm
In such a wrong wyse · the wommon to bi-gyle?

For we haue no lettre of owre lyf · how longe it shal dure.
Suche lessounes lordes shulde · louie to here,
And how he myȝte moste meyne · manliche fynde.
Nouȝt to fare as a fitheler or a frere · for to seke festes,
Homelich at other mennes houses · and hatyen her owne.
Elyng is the halle · vche daye in the wyke,
There the lorde ne the lady · liketh nouȝte to sytte.
Now hath vche riche a reule · to eten bi hym-selue
In a pryue parloure · for pore mennes sake,
Or in a chambre with a chymneye · and leue the chief halle,
That was made for meles · men to eten inne;
And al to sparé to spille · that spende shal an other.
I haue yherde hiegh men · etyng atte table,
Carpen as thei clerkes were · of Cryste and of his miȝtes,
And leyden fautes vppon the fader · that fourmed vs alle,
And carpen aȝeine clerkes · crabbed wordes;—
"Whi wolde owre saueoure suffre · suche a worme in his blisse,
That bigyled the womman · and the man after,
Thorw whiche wyles and wordes · thei wenten to helle,
And al her sede for here synne · the same deth suffred?
Here lyeth ȝowre lore" · thise lordes gynneth dispute,
"Of that ȝe clerkes vs kenneth · of Cryst by the gospel;
Filius non portabit iniquitatem patris, &c.
Whi shulde we that now ben · for the werkes of Adam
Roten and to-rende? · resoun wolde it neuere;
Vnusquisque portabit onus suum, &c."
Suche motyues thei moeue · this maistres in her glorie,
And maken men in mysbileue · that muse moche on her wordes;
Ymaginatyf her-afterward · shal answere to ȝowre purpos.
Augustyne to suche argueres · he telleth hem this teme,
Non plus sapere quam oportet.

Bothe hir hosebonde and heo · to helle thorw him wenten,
And heore seed for that sunne · the same wo drien."
Suche motyues thei meuen · thei maistres in heor glorie,
And maketh men misbileeue · that musen on heore wordes.
But Austin the olde · for alle suche precheth,
And for suche tale-tellers · such a teeme scheweth,
Non plus sapere quam oportet sapere.

[*Not in* **C**-*text.*]

A. 61. an (*for* and) V. 71. musen on T; leeuen in V. **B.** 93. houses WCROB; house L. 107. wenten CRB; went L.

This wilneth ȝe neuer to wite · whi that god wolde
Soffre Sathan · his sed to bi-gyle;
But leeueth on that lore · that lereth holichirche,
And preye him of pardoun · and penaunce in thi lyue,
And for his muchele merci · to amenden vs heere.
For alle that wilneth to wite · the weyes of god almihti,
I wolde his eȝe weore in his ers · and his heele aftur;
That euer eft wilneth to wite · whi that god wolde
Soffre Sathan · his seed to bi-gyle,
Or Iudas the Ieuȝ · Iesu bi-traye;
Al was as he wolde · lord, i-heried be thou!
And al worth as thou wolt · what so we tellen!

Wilneth neuere to wite · whi that god wolde
Suffre Sathan · his sede to bigyle,
Ac bileue lelly · in the lore of holicherche,
And preye hym of pardoun · and penaunce in thi lyue,
And for his moche mercye · to amende ȝow here.
For alle that wilneth to wyte · the weyes of god almiȝty,
I wolde his eye were in his ers · and his fynger after,
That euere wilneth to wite · whi that god wolde
Suffre Sathan · his sede to bigile,
Or Iudas to the Iuwes · Iesu bytraye.
Al was as thow wolde · lorde, yworschiped be thow,
And al worth as thow wolte · what so we dispute!
And tho that vseth this hanelounes · to blende mennes wittes,
What is Dowel fro Dobet · now def mote he worthe,
(Sitthe he wilneth to wyte · whiche thei ben bothe),
But if he lyue in the lyf · that longeth to Dowel;
For I dar ben his bolde borgh · that Dobet wil he neuere,
Theigh Dobest drawe on hym · day after other.'
And whan that Witte was ywar · what dame Studye tolde,
He bicome so confus · he couth nouȝte loke,
And as doumbe as deth · and drowe hym arrere;
And for no carpyng I couth after · ne knelyng to the grounde,
I myȝte gete no greyne · of his grete wittis,
But al laughyng he louted · and loked vppon Studye,
In signe that I shulde · biseche hir of grace.

A. 79. to wite þe UTH$_2$; two V; see ll. 73, 81, 88. 85. worþ TUH$_2$; beo V. 86. my TH$_2$; me V. 88. siþen T; V *has* Sire. 93. mele

And nou cometh a conioun · and wolde cacchen of my wittes,
What is Dowel from Dobet! · nou daffe mot he worthe,
Sithen he wilneth to wite · whuche thei ben alle!
Bote he liue in the leste degre · that longeth to Dowel,
I dar ben his borw · that Dobet nul he neuere,
Thauȝ Dobest drawe on him · day aftur othur.'
And whon that Wit was i-war · hou his wyf tolde,
He bi-com so confoundet · he couthe not mele,
And as doumbe as a dore · drouȝ him asyde.
Bote for no craft that I couthe · ne knelyng to grounde,
I mihte gete no greyn · of his grete wittes,
But al lauȝwhinge he loutede · and lokede vppon Studie,
In signe that I schulde · bi-sechen hire of grace.

And whanne Wit was y-war · what Studie menede,
Ich myghte gete no greyn · of Wittes grete wittes,

Bote al lauhwynge he loutede · and loked vp-on Studie,
Semynge that ich sholde · by-sechen hure of grace.

TUH$_2$; medle V. 96. his TUH$_2$; hire V. **B.** 129. hauelounes L. 137. as WCROB; a L. **C.** 84. y-war IK; whar P. 86. lotede P; *see* l. 88.

And whon I wuste of his wil · to his wyf con I knele,
And seide, 'merci, madame, 3oure mon schal I worthe,
To worchen 3oure wille · while my lyf dureth;
Kenne me kuyndely · to knowen what is Dowel.'
'For thi mekenesse, mon,' quod heo · 'and for thi milde speche,
I schal kenne the to my cosyn · that Clergye is i-hoten.
He hath wedded a wyf · with-inne this wikes sixe,
Is sib to the seuen ars · that Scripture is i-nempnet;
Thei two, as ich hope · after my be-sechyng,
Schul wisse the to Dowel · I dar vndertake.'
Thenne was I as fayn · as foul on feir morwen,
Gladdore then the gleo-mon is · of his grete 3iftes,

And whan I was war of his wille · to his wyf gan I loute,
And seyde, 'mercy, madame · 3owre man shal I worthe,
As longe as I lyue · bothe late and rathe,
Forto worche 3owre wille · the while my lyf dureth,
With that 3e kenne me kyndely · to knowe what is Dowel.'
'For thi mekenesse, man,' quod she · 'and for thi mylde speche,
I shal kenne the to my cosyn · that Clergye is hoten.
He hath wedded a wyf · with-inne this syx monethes,
Is sybbe to the seuene artz · Scripture is hir name.
Thei two, as I hope · after my techyng,
Shullen wissen the to Dowel · I dar it vndertake.'
Thanne was I also fayne · as foule of faire morwe,
And gladder than the gleman · that golde hath to 3ifte,
And axed hir the heighe weye · where that clergye dwelte,
'And telle me some token,' quod I · 'for tyme is that I wende.'
'Axe the heighe waye,' quod she · 'hennes to Suffre-
Bothe-wel-and-wo · 3if that thow wolt lerne,
And ryde forth by Ricchesse · ac rest thow nau3t therinne,
For if thow couplest the ther-with · to Clergye comestow neuere.
And also the likerouse launde · that Leccherye hatte,
Leue hym on thi left halue · a large myle or more,
Tyl thow come to a courte · Kepe-wel-thi-tonge-
Fro-lesynges-and-lither-speche- · and-likerouse-drynkes.
Thanne shaltow se Sobrete · and Symplete-of-speche,

A. 100. worþe TUH$_2$ beo V; *see* l. 85. 102. Kenne TUH$_2$; Teche V.

And askede hire the heiȝe wey · wher Clergye dwelleth,
'And tel me sum tokne to him · for tyme is that I wende.'
'I schal teche the the heiȝe wey,' quod heo · 'from hennes to Soffre-
Bothe-weole-and-wo · ȝif that thou wolt leorne,
And ryd forth bi Richesse · reste the nouȝt ther-inne;
For ȝif thou couple the to him · to Clergie comestou neuere.
And eke the longe launde · that Lecherie hette,
Leue him on thi luft half · a large myle or more,
Forte thou come to a court · Kep-wel-thi-tonge-
From-lesynges-and-lyȝeres-speche- · and-lykerous-drinke.
Thenne schaltou seo Sobre · and Symple-of-speche,

When ich was war of hus wille · to that womman ich loutede,
And seide, 'mercy, ma dame · ȝoure man shal ich worthe
As longe as ich lyue · bothe late and rathe,
And for to worche ȝoure wil · the while my lyf dureth,
With that ȝe kenne me kyndeliche · to knowe what is Dowel.'
'For thi meeknesse,' quath hue · 'and for thi mylde speche,
Ich shal the kenne to Clergie · my cosyn, that knoweth
Alle kyné konnynges · and comsynges of Dowel,
Of Dobet and Dobest · for doctor he is yknowe,
And of Scripture the skylful · and scryuaynes were trewe.
For hue is sybbe to the seuen ars · and also my soster,
And Cleregies wedded wif · as wys as hym-selue
Of lore and of letterure · of lawe and of reson.
So with that that Cleregie can · and counsail of Scripture
Thow shalt conne and knowe · kyndeliche Dowel.'
Thenne was ich al so fayn · as foul of fair morwenynge,
Gladder than gleo-man · that gold hath to gyfte,
And asked of hure the heye way · wher that Cleregie dwelte—
'And tel me som tokne,' quath ich · 'for tyme is that ich wende.'
'Aske the heye wey,' quath hue · 'hennes to Suffre-
Bothe-wele-and-moche-wo · yf thow wolt lerne.
And ryd forth by Richesse · and rest nouht ther-ynne;
Yf thow coueite to be riche · to Cleregie comst thow neuere.

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104. kenne TUH$_2$; teche V. C. 91. duyreþ P. 97. skyful (*sic*) P. trywe P. 102. kendeliche P. 110. coueite MFEK; coueity P.

That eche wy3t beo in wil · his wit the to schewe.
So schalt thou come to Clergye · that con mony thinges ;
Sei him this signe · that I sette him to scole,
And that I grette wel his wyf · for I wrot hire a bulle,
And sette hire to Sapience · and to hire psauter i-gloset.
Lo! logyk I lered hire · and al the lawe after,
And alle musons in musyk · I made hire to knowe.
Plato the poyete · I put him furste to boke,
Aristotle and other mo · to arguen I tau3te ;
Gramer for gurles · I gon furste to write,
And beot hem with a baleys · but 3if thei wolde lernen.

That eche wi3te be in wille · his witte the to shewe,
And thus shaltow come to Clergye · that can many thinges.

Saye hym this signe · I sette hym to scole,
And that I grete wel his wyf · for I wrote hir many bokes,
And sette hir to Sapience · and to the sauter glose.
Logyke I lerned hir · and many other lawes,
And alle the musouns in musike · I made hir to knowe.
Plato the poete · I put hym fyrste to boke,
Aristotle and other moo · to argue I tau3te.
Grammer for gerles · I garte first wryte,
And bette hem with a baleis · but if thei wolde lerne.
Of alkinnes craftes · I contreued toles,
Of carpentrie, of kerueres · and compassed masouns,
And lerned hem leuel and lyne · though I loke dymme.
Ac Theologie hath tened me · ten score tymes,
The more I muse there-inne · the mistier it semeth,
And the depper I deuyne · the derker me it thinketh ;
It is no science for sothe · forto sotyle inne ;
A ful lethy thinge it were · 3if that loue nere.
Ac for it let best by Loue · I loue it the bettre ;
For there that Loue is leder · ne lacked neuere grace.
Loke thow loue lelly · 3if the lyketh Dowel ;

A. 122. eche wy3t UTH$_2$; eueri mon V. 124. signe TUH$_2$; tokene V. 131. gurles H$_2$TU ; children V ; *see* Pass. x. 155. 134. kende TH$_2$; tau3te V. 137. muse TUH$_2$; studie V. mistlokere TU ; derkore V. 138. derkore (*last note*) ; derkere T ; mistiloker V. 141. lat T ; V *om.* **B.** 169. grete

Of alle maner craftus · I con counterfeten heor tooles,
Of carpunters and keruers; · I kende furst masouns,
And lered hem liuel and lyne · thauȝ I loke dimme.
Bote Teologye hath teoned me · ten score tymes;
For the more I muse theron · the mistiloker hit semeth,
And the deppore I diuinede · the derkore me thouȝte.
Hit is no science forsothe · to sotilen ther-inne,
Neore the loue that lyhth therinne · a lewed thing hit weore.
Bote for hit lat best bi Loue · I leeue hit the betere;
For that Loue is the lord · that lakkede neuer grace;
Leef wel ther-vppon · ȝif thou thenke Dowel;

Bothe wommen and wyn · wratthe, yre, and slewthe,
Yf thow hem vse other haunte · haue god my treuthe!
To Clergie shult thow neuere come · ne knowe what ys Dowel.
Ac yf thou happe,' quath hue · 'that thow hitte on Clergie,
And hast vnderstondyng · what he wolde mene,
Sey to hym thy-self · ouer-see my bokes,
And seye ich grette wel hus wif · ich wrot hure a byble,
And sette hure to Sapience · and to the sauter glosed.
Logyk ich lerede hure · and al the lawe after,
Alle the musons in musyk · ich made hure to knowe.
Plato the poete · ich putte hym ferst to booke,
Aristotle and othere · to arguen ich tauhte.
Grammere for gurles · ich gart furst wryte,
And bet hem with a baleyse · bote yf thei wolde lerne.
Of alle kyne craftes · ich contreeuede here tooles,
Of carpentrie, of kerueres · and contreeuede the compas,
And cast out by squire · bothe lyne and leuell.
Thus thorw my lore beth men ylered · thauh ich loke dymme.
Ac Theologie hath teened me · ten score tymes,
The more ich muse ther-on · the mystiloker hit seineth,
And the deppere ich deuyne · the derker me thynketh hit.
Hit is no science sothliche · bote a sothfast by-leyue;
Ac for hit lereth men to louye · ich by-leyue ther-on the bettere.
For Loue is a lykynge thyng · and loth for to greue;
Lerne for to louye · yf the lyke Dowel,

WCB; grette LRO. 172. muke (*for* musike) L. 174. Arestotle L.
C. 112. hem FS; hit PEIKG. 118. glosede P. 131. deerker P.
132. by-lyue P; *see* l. 133. 135. dowel IMFSK; to dowel PE; cf. l. 142.

For Dobet and Dobest · beoth drawen of Loue scole.
In other science hit seith · seo hit in Catoùn,
Qui simulat verbis, nec corde est fidus amicus,
Tu quoque fac simile, sic ars deluditur arte.
But Theologie techeth not so · hose taketh kepe,
He kenneth us the contrarie · aȝeyn Catons wordes,
And biddeth vs ben as bretheren · and blessen vr enemys,
And louen hem that lyȝen on vs · lellyche at heor neode,
And do good aȝeyn vuel; · god him-self hoteth,

For Dobet and Dobest · ben of Loues kynne.
In other science it seyth · I seigh it in Catoun,
Qui simulat verbis, nec corde est fidus amicus,
Tu quoque fac simile, sic ars deluditur arte.
Who-so gloseth as gylours don · go me to the same,
And so shaltow false folke · and faythlees bigyle,
This is Catounes kennyng · to clerkes that he lereth.
Ac Theologye techeth nouȝt so · who-so taketh ȝeme,
He kenneth vs the contrarye · aȝein Catones wordes;
For he bit vs be as bretheren · and bidde for owre enemys,
And louen hem that lyen on vs · and lene hem whan hem nedeth,
And do good aȝeines yuel · god hym-self it hoteth,
Dum tempus habemus, operemur bonum ad omnes, maxime autem ad domesticos fidei.
Poule preched the peple · that parfitnesse loued,
To do good for goddes loue · and gyuen men that asked,
And nameliche to suche · that sueth owre bileue.
And alle that lakketh vs or lyeth vs · owre lorde techeth vs to louye,
And nouȝt to greuen hem that greueth vs · god hym-self forbadde it,
Michi vindictam, et ego retribuam.
For-thi loke thow louye · as longe as thow durest,
For is no science vnder sonne · so souereyne for the soule.
Ac astronomye is an harde thynge · and yuel forto knowe,
Geometrie and geomesye · is ginful of speche;
Who-so thenketh werche with tho two · thryueth ful late.
For sorcerye is the souereyne boke · that to the science longeth.
ȝet ar there fybicches in forceres · of fele mennes makynge,
Experimentz of alkenamye · the poeple to deceyue,
If thow thinke to Dowel · dele ther-with neuere.

And seide hit him-self · in ensaumple for the beste,
Necesse est vt veniant scandala.
Bote astronomye is hard thing · and vuel to knowe,
Gemetrie and gemensye · is gynful of speche,
That worcheth with theose threo · thriueth he late,
For sorcerye is the souereyn bok · that to that science longith,
3et arn there febicchis of forellis · of mony mennes wittes,
Experimentis of alconomye · of Alberdes makynge;
Nigromancye and perimancie · the pouke to rise maketh;
3if thou thenche Dowel · dele with hem neuere.

For of Dobet and of Dobest · here doctor is dere Loue.'

A. 144. loue scole U; louis skile T; lore in scole V. 145. *fidus* TU; *fidelis* V. *Tu—arte*; VTUH$_2$ *om., but given in* D. 147. kenniþ T; techeþ V. 148. vs TUH$_2$; V *om.* 155, 156. bok—forellis *from* T; *also in* UH$_2$; V *om.* **B.** 189. seigh CWO; saye L. 190. *similat* L. *nec* COB; *vel* LW. 212. alkenamye WC; alkamye L.

Alle theose sciences · siker, I my-seluen
Haue i-founded hem furst · folk to deceyue.
I be-take the to Crist,' quod heo · 'I con teche the no betere.'
I seide, 'graunt merci, madame' · and mekeliche hire grette,
And wente forth on my wei · withouten more lettynge,
And fond as heo fore-tolde · and forth gon I wende,
And ar I coome to Clergye · couthe I neuer stunte.
I grette the goode mon · as the gode wyf me tauȝte,
And afterward his wyf · I worschupet hem bothe,
And tolde hire the tokenes · that me i-tauȝt were.
Was neuer gome vppon grounde · seththen god made heuene,
Feirore vndurfonge · ne frendloker maad at ese,
Then I my-self sothli · so sone as heo wuste
That I was of Wittes hous · and with his wif dam Studie.
Curteisliche Clergye · clupte me and custe,
And asked hou Wit ferde · and eke his wyf Studie.
And I seide sothlyche · 'thei sende me hider
To leorne at ȝou Dowel · and Dobet after,
And setthen afturward to seo · sumwhat of Dobest.'
'Hit is a wel feir lyf,' quod heo · 'among the lewed peple,
Actif it is i-hoten · hosebondes hit vsen;

[*Here* MS. V *ends; the rest of the Passus is from* T.]

Alle thise sciences I my-self · sotiled and ordeyned,
And founded hem formest · folke to deceyue.
Telle Clergye thise tokenes · and Scripture after,
To conseille the kyndely · to knowe what is Dowel.'
I seide, 'graunt mercy, madame' · and mekeliche hir grette,
And went wiȝtlich awey · with-oute more lettynge.
And til I come to Clergye · I couthe neuere stynte.
And grette the good man · as Studye me tauȝte,
And afterwardes the wyf · and worshiped hem bothe,
And tolde hem the tokenes · that me tauȝte were.
Was neuere gome vppon this grounde · sith god made the worlde,
Fairer vnder-fongen · ne frendeloker at ese,
Than my-self sothly · sone so he wist
That I was of Wittis hous · and with his wyf dame Studye.
I seyde to hem sothely · that sent was I thider,
Dowel and Dobet · and Dobest to lerne.

Trewe tilieris on erthe · taillours and souteris,
And alle kyne crafty men · that cunne here foode wynne,
With any trewe trauaille · toille for here foode,
Diken or deluen · Do-wel it hatte.
To breke beggeris bred · and bakken hem with clothis,
Counforte the carful · that in castel ben fetterid,
And seken out the seke · and sende hem that hem nedith;
Obedient as bretheren · and sustren to othere;
Thus bed the Do-bet · so berith witnesse the sauter;
Ecce quam bonum et quam iocundum, habitare, fratres, in vnum.
Sike with the sory · singe with the glade,
Gaudere cum gaudentibus, et flere cum flentibus,
Dredles is Dobet · Dobest wot the sothe!
Sire Dobest hath benefices · so is he best worthi,
Be that god in the gospel · grauntith and techith;
Qui facit et docuerit, magnus vocabitur in regno celorum.
Forthi is Dobest · a bisshopis pere,
Prince ouer godis peple · to prechen or to chaste.
Dobet doth ful wel · and dewid he is also,
And hath possessions and pluralites · for pore menis sake:
For mendynauntz at mischiefe · the men were dewid;
And that is riȝtful religioun · none renneris aboute,
Ne no leperis ouer lond · ladies to shryue.

Tho wente ich my way · with-oute more lettynge,
And to Clergie ich kam · as clerkes me seide,
And ich grette hym goodliche · and greithliche hym told,
How that Wit and hus wif · wissed me to hym,
To kenne and to knowe · kyndeliche Dowel.

A. 180. Actif it TUD; A lyf (*wrongly*) V. 191. *This line is from* MS. Harl. 3954, fol. 122; TH_2UD *have only,* God wot, þis is dobet. 194. a UD; TH_2 *om.* **B.** 214. sciences WRB; science LO. 221. grette WCRO; gret L. **C.** 139. greiliche (*sic*) P. 141. kenne IMFS; kowe (*for* knowe) P.

[*Not in* **A**-*text.*]

'It is a comune lyf,' quod Clergye · 'on holycherche to bileue,
With alle the artikles of the feithe · that falleth to be knowe.
And that is to bileue lelly · bothe lered and lewed,
On the grete god · that gynnying had neuere,
And on the sothfaste sone · that saued mankynde
Fro the dedly deth · and the deueles power,
Thorwgh the helpe of the holy goste · the whiche goste is of bothe;
Three propre persones · ac nouȝt in plurel noumbre,
For al is but on god · and eche is god hym-selue;
Deus pater, deus filius, deus spiritus sanctus;
God the fader, god the sone · god holigoste of bothe,
Maker of mankynde · and of bestes bothe.
Austyn the olde · here-of he made bokes,
And hym-self ordeyned · to sadde vs in bileue.
Who was his autour? · alle the foure euangelistes;
And Cryst clepid hym-self so · the ewangelistes bereth witnesse:—
Ego in patre et pater in me est; et, qui videt me, videt et patrem meum.
Alle the clerkes vnder Cryst · ne couthe this assoille,
But thus it bilongeth to bileue · to lewed that willen Dowel.
For had neuere freke fyne wytte · the feyth to dispute,
Ne man had no merite · myȝte it ben yproued:
Fides non habet meritum, vbi humana racio prebet experimentum.
Thanne is Dobet to suffre · for thi soules helth,
Al that the boke bit · by holycherche techyng;
And that is—"man, bi thi miȝte · for mercies sake,
Loke thow worche it in werke · that thi worde sheweth;
Suche as thow semest in syȝte · be in assay y-founde;
Appare quod es, vel esto quod appares:
And lat no body be · bi thi beryng bygyled,
But be suche in thi soule · as thow semest with-oute."
Thanne is Dobest to be bolde · to blame the gylty,
Sithenes thow seest thi-self · as in soule clene;
Ac blame thow neuere body · and thow be blame-worthy:
Si culpare velis · culpabilis esse cauebis,
Dogma tuum sordet · cum te tua culpa remordet.
God in the gospel · grymly repreueth

[*Not in* A-*text.*]

'By Cryst,' quath Clergie · 'yf thow coueyte Dowel,
Kep the ten commaundemens · and kep the fro synne;
And by-leyf leelly · how godes sone a-lyghte
On the mayde Marie · for mankynnes sake,
And by-cam man of that mayde · with-oute mannes kynde.
And al that holy churche · here-of can the lere,
By-leyf lelly there-on · and look thow do ther-after.

Her-of Austin the olde · made bokes and bokes;
Ho was hus autor · and him of god tauhte?
Patriarkes and prophetes · aposteles and angeles
And the holy trinite · to Austyn appeirede,
And he ous seide as he seih · and so ich by-leyue,
That he seih the syre and the sone · and seynte spirit togederes,
And alle thre bote on God · and her-of made he bokes,
ȝe, busiliche bokes; · ho beth hus wytnesses?

Ego in patre et pater in me est; et qui me vidit, patrem meum uidit qui in celis est.

Alle the clerkes vnder Crist · ne couthe this asoile;
Bote thus by-longeth to by-leyue · alle that lyketh dowel.
For hadde neuere frek fyn wit · the faith to dispute,
Ne man myghte haue no merit ther-of · myghte hit be preoued;

Fides non habet meritum, ubi humana racio prebet experimentum.

Thus By-leyue and Leaute · and Loue is the thridde,
That maketh men to Dowel · Dobet, and Dobest.'

B. 237. propre R; *wrongly om. in* LWCOB. C. 156. beþ IFKG; but (*for* buth) P. *me est* IM; P om. *est.* 160. preouede P. *prebet experimentum* EMFS; *possidet dominium* (?) P.

[*Not in* **A**-*text.*]

Alle that lakken any lyf · and lakkes han hem-selue:
Quid consideras festucam in oculo fratris tui, trabem in oculo tuo non vides?
Why meuestow thi mode · for a mote in thi brotheres eye,
Sithen a beem in thine owne · ablyndeth thi-selue?
Eice primo trabem de oculo tuo, etc.,
Whiche letteth the to loke · lasse other more.
I rede eche a blynde bosarde · do bote to hym-selue;
For abbotes and for prioures · and for alle manere prelates,
As parsones and parisshe-prestes · that preche shulde and teche,
Alle manere men · to amenden by here myȝte;
This tixte was tolde ȝow · to ben war, ar ȝe tauȝte,
That ȝe were suche as ȝe seyde · to salue with othere.
For goddis worde wolde nouȝt be loste · for that worcheth euere,
If it auailled nouȝt the comune · it myȝte auaille ȝowseluen.
Ac it semeth now sothly · to the worldes syght,
That goddes worde worcheth nauȝte · on lered ne on lewede,
But in suche a manere as Marke · meneth in the gospel,
Dum cecus ducit cecum, ambo in foueam cadunt.
Lewed men may likne ȝow thus · that the beem lithe in ȝowre eyghen,
And the festu is fallen · for ȝowre defaute,
In alle manere men · thourgh mansed prestes.
The bible bereth witnesse · that alle the folke of Israel
Byttere abouȝte the gultes · of two badde prestes,
Offyn and Fynes; · for her coueytise,
Archa dei myshapped · and Ely brake his nekke.
For-thi, ȝe corectoures, claweth her-on · and corecteth fyrst ȝow-seluen,
And thanne mowe ȝe saufly seye · as Dauid made the sauter:
Existimasti inique quod ero tui similis: arguam te, et statuam contra faciem tuam.
And thanne shal borel clerkes ben abasched · to blame ȝow or to greue,
And carpen nouȝte as thei carpen now · and calle ȝow doumbe houndes,
Canes non valentes latrare,

B. 262. *non vides* in R only.

[*Not in* **A**-*text*.]

[*Not in* **C**-*text*; *but compare* **C**. Pass. i. ll. 104–114 (p. 11), *with* **B**. Pass. x. ll. 280–283.]

Gregory the grete clerke · a good pope in his tyme,
Of religioun the rewele · he reherside in his morals,
And seide it in ensaumple · that thei shulde do the betere:
'Whanne fisshes faile the flood · or the fresshe watir,
Thei diȝe for the drouȝte · whanne thei dreiȝe lengen;

And drede to wratthe ȝow in any worde · ȝowre werkemanship to lette,
And be prestiore at ȝowre prayere · than for a pounde of nobles;
And al for ȝowre holynesse · haue ȝe this in herte.
Amonges riȝtful religiouse · this reule schulde be holde;
Gregorie the grete clerke · and the goed pope
Of religioun the reule · reherseth in his morales,
And seyth it in ensaumple · for thei schulde do there-after,
'Whenne fissches failen the flode · or the fresche water,
Thei deyen for drouthe · whanne thei drie ligge;
Riȝt so, quod Gregorie · religioun roileth,
Sterueth and stynketh · and steleth lordes almesses,
That oute of couent and cloystre · coueyten to libbe.'
For if heuene be on this erthe · and ese to any soule,
It is in cloistere or in scole · be many skilles I fynde;
For in cloistre cometh no man · to chide ne to fiȝte,
But alle is buxumnesse there and bokes · to rede and to lerne.
In scole there is scorne · but if a clerke wil lerne,
And grete loue and lykynge · for eche of hem loueth other.
Ac now is Religioun a ryder · a rowmer bi stretes,
A leder of louedayes · and a londe-bugger,
A priker on a palfray · fro manere to manere,
An heep of houndes at his ers · as he a lorde were.
And but if his knaue knele · that shal his cuppe brynge,
He loureth on hym and axeth hym · who tauȝte hym curteisye?
Litel had lordes to done · to ȝyue londe fram her heires
To religious, that haue no reuthe · though it reyne on here auteres!
In many places ther hij persones ben · be hem-self at ese,
Of the pore haue thei no pite · and that is her charite;
Ac thei leten hem as lordes · her londe lith so brode.
Ac there shal come a kyng · and confesse ȝow religiouses,
And bete ȝow, as the bible telleth · for brekynge of ȝowre reule,

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A. 209. louedayes H_2; ladies TD; *see* l. 20. B. 291—303. *These*

Riȝt so be religioun · it roileth and steruith,
That out of couent and cloistre · coueiten to libben.'
Ac now is Religioun a ridere · and a rennere aboute,
A ledere of louedayes · and a lond-biggere,
Poperith on a palfrey · to toune and to toune,

From C. vi. 147–170 (p. 127).

[Gregorie the grete clerk · gart write in bokes
The ruele of alle religious · ryghtful and obedient.
Right as fisshes in flod · whenne hem faileth water,
Deȳen for drouthe · whenne thei drye liggen,
Ryght so religion · roteth and sterueth,
That out of couent and cloistre · coueyteth to dwelle.
For yf heuene be on thys erthe · other eny eyse for saule,
Hit is in cloistre other in scole · by meny skyles ich fynde.
For in cloistre cometh no man · to chide ne to fighte;
In scole ys loue and lownesse · and lykyng to lerne.
Ac meny day, men telleth · bothe monkes and chanouns
Han ride out of a-ray · here ruele vuel yholde,
Lederes of louedaies · and landes purchassed,
And priked a-boute on palfrais · fro places to maners,
An hepe of houndes at hus ers · as he a lord were;
And but hus knaue knele · that shal hus coppe holde,
He loketh al louryng · and 'lordein' hym calleth.
Lytel hadde lordes a-do · to ȝeue londe fro here aires
To religious, that han no reuthe · thauh hit reyne on here auters.
In places ther thei persons beth · by hem-self at ese,
Of the poure han thei no pyte · that is here pure charite.
ȝe leten ȝow alle as lordes · ȝoure londe lyth to brode.
Ac ȝyt shal come a kyng · and confesse ȝow alle,
And bete ȝow, as the byble telleth · for brekyng of ȝoure reule,

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13 *lines are in* R *only*; *cf.* Text A *and* Text C. 302. no *from* Text C; R *om.* 312. done RB; doñ L.

A bidowe or a baselard · he berith be his side;
Godis flessh and his fet · and hise fyue woundis
Arn more in his mynde · than the memorie of his foundours.
This is the lif of this lordis · that lyuen shulde with Do-bet,
And wel-a-wey wers · and I shulde al telle.

And amende monyales · monkes and chanouns,
And putten hem to her penaunce · *ad pristinum statum ire,*
And barounes with erles beten hem · thorugh *beatus-virres* techynge,
That here barnes claymen · and blame ȝow foule:
Hij in curribus et hij in equis; ipsi obligati sunt, etc.,
And thanne freres in here freitoure · shal fynden a keye
Of Costantynes coffres · in which is the catel
That Gregories god-children · han yuel dispended.
And thanne shal the abbot of Abyndoun · and alle his issu for euere
Haue a knokke of a kynge · and incurable the wounde.
That this worth soth, seke ȝe · that oft ouer-se the bible:
Quomodo cessauit exactor, quieuit tributum; contriuit dominus baculum impiorum,
et virgam dominancium cedencium plaga insanabili, etc.
Ac ar that kynge come · Cayme shal awake.
Ac Dowel shal dyngen hym adoune · and destruyen his myȝte.
'Thanne is Dowel and Dobet,' quod I · '*dominus* and kniȝthode.

From B. xi. 1–12.

[Thanne Scripture scorned me · and a skile tolde,
And lakked me in Latyne · and liȝte by me she sette,
And seyde, '*multi multa sciunt, et seipsos nesciunt.*'
Tho wepte I for wo · and wratth of her speche,
And in a wynkyng wratth · wex I aslepe.
A merueillouse meteles · mette me thanne,
That I was rauisshed riȝt there · and Fortune me fette,
And into the londe of Longynge · allone she me brouȝte,
And in a myroure that hiȝt Mydlerd · she mad me to biholde.
Sitthen she sayde to me · 'here myȝtow se wondres,
And knowe that thou coueytest · and come ther-to, par aunter.'
Thenne hadde Fortune folwyng hir · two faire damoyseles,
Concupiscentia-carnis · men called the elder mayde,

B. 322. *et* WCROB; L *om.* 326. his WCROB; L *om.* C. 163.

I wende that kinghed and kniȝthed · and caiseris with erlis
Wern Do-wel and Do-bet · and Do-best of hem alle;
For I haue seiȝe it my-selfe · and siththen red it aftir,
How Crist counseillith the comune · and kenneth hem this tale,
Super cathedram Moisi sederunt principes.
For-thi I wende that tho wyes · wern Do-best of alle!

From C. vi. 171–180 (pp. 127, 129).

And amende ȝow monkes · moniales, and chanons,
And putte ȝow to ȝoure penaunce · *ad pristinum statum ire.*
And barons and here barnes · blame ȝow and reproue;
Hii in curribus et hi in equis: ipsi obligati sunt, et ceciderunt.
Freres in here freitour · shulle fynde that tyme
Bred with-oute beggynge · to lyue by euere after,
And Constantyn shal be here cook · and couerer of here churche.
For the abbot of Engelonde · and the abbesse hys nece
Shullen haue a knok on here crounes · and in-curable the wounde;
Contriuit dominus baculum impiorum, uirgam dominancium plaga in-sanabili.
Ac er that kyng come · as cronycles me tolde,
Clerkus and holychurche · shal be clothed newe.]

Thanne Scripture scorned me · and many skyles shewede,
And contynaunce made to Clergie · to congie me, hit semede,
And lakkede me in Latyn · and lyght by me sette,
And seide, '*multi multa sapiunt, et seipsos nesciunt.*'
Tho wepte ich for wo · and wrathede of here wordes,
And in a wynkynge ich worth · and wonderliche ich mette.
For ich was raueshed ryght ther; · Fortune me fette,
In-to the londe of longynge · and loue hue me brouhte,
And in a myrour, hihte Myddelerd · hue made me to loke,
And sutthe seide to me · 'her myghte thou see wondres,
And knowe that thow coueitest · and come ther-to, paraunter.'
Thenne hadde Fortune folwynge hure · two faire maidenes,
Concupiscentia-carnis · me calde the eldere mayde,

þanne MF; þenne ISKG; The PE. 166. here I; hus P. 167. worth MS; warth PI. an (*for* and) P. mete P. 168. raueshede P.

I nile not scorne,' quod Scripture · 'but scryueyns liȝe;
Kinghod and kniȝthod · for auȝt I can aspie, 222

And Couetyse-of-eyes · ycalled was that other;
Pryde-of-parfyte-lyuynge · pursued hem bothe,
And badde me, for my contenaunce · acounte Clergye liȝte.
Concupiscentia-carnis · colled me aboute the nekke, 16
And seyde, 'thou art ȝonge and ȝepe · and hast ȝeres ynowe
Forto lyue longe · and ladyes to louye.
And in this myroure thou myȝte se · myrthes ful manye,
That leden the wil to lykynge · al thi lyf-tyme.' 20
The secounde seide the same · 'I shal suwe thi wille;
Til thow be a lorde and haue londe · leten the I nelle,
That I ne shal folwe thi felawship · if Fortune it lyke.'
From B. xi. 13–35. 'He shal fynde me his frende' · quod Fortune therafter; 24
'The freke that folwed my wille · failled neuer blisse.'
Thanne was there one that hiȝte Elde · that heuy was of chere;
'Man,' quod he, 'if I mete with the · bi Marie of heuene,
Thou shalt fynde Fortune the faille · at thi moste nede, 28
And *Concupiscentia-carnis* · clene the forsake!
Bitterliche shaltow banne thanne · bothe dayes and niȝtes
Coueytise-of-eyghe · that euer thow hir knewe,
And Pryde-of-parfyt-lyuynge · to moche peril the brynge.' 32
'ȝee, recche the neuere,' quod Recchelesnesse · stode forth in ragged clothes,
'Folwe forth that Fortune wole · thow hast wel fer til elde;
A man may stoupe tymes ynow · whan he shal tyne the croune!']

'I nel nouȝt scorne,' quod Scripture · 'but-if scryueynes lye;
Kynghod ne knyȝthod · by nauȝt I can awayte, 333
Helpeth nouȝt to heueneward · one heres ende,
Ne ricchesse riȝt nouȝt · ne reaute of lordes.

C. 176. me IMFSK; in PE. 179. ert P. 181. myȝt MESIK; myst P. 183. sewe MF; sywe P. 186. Hue (*for* He) P. 188. euy (*for* heuy) P.

Helpith nou3t to heuene · at one 3eris ende,
Ne richesse ne rentis · ne realte of lordis. 224

And Couetyse-of-eyen · ycald was that othere.
And Pruyde-of-parfit-lyuynge · pursewede me faste, 176
And bad me for my contynence · counte Clergies lore lyght.
Concupiscentia-carnis · comfortyde me in thys wyse,
And seide, 'thow art 3ong and 3ep · and hast 3eris ynowe
For to lyue longe · and ladyes to louye. 180
And in this mirour thow my3t see · murthes ful menye,
That lede the wol to lykynge · al thy lyf-tyme.'
The secounde mayde seide · 'ich shal sewe thi wil;
Til thow be a lord of londe · leten the ich nelle, 184
That ich ne shal folwie thy felaushupe · yf Fortune lyke.'
'He shal fynde me hus frende' · quath Fortune her-after;
'That man that me lyketh helpe · myghte nat myshappe.'
Thenne was ther on hiht Elde · that heuy was of chere; 188
'Man,' quath Elde, 'mete ich with the · by Marie of heuene!
Thou shalt fynde Fortune · faile at thy moste neede,
And *Concupiscentia-carnis* · clene the for-sake!
Byterliche shalt thow banne thenne · bothe dayes and nyghtes
Couetyse-of-eyen · that euere thow hure knewe, 193
And Pruyde-of-parfit-lyuynge · to muche peril the brynge.'
'3e, recche the neuere,' quath Rechelesness · stod forth in raggede clothes,
'Folwe forth that Fortune wol · thou hast ful fer to elde; 196
A man may stoupe tyme ynowe · when he shal tyne the corone!'
Syre Wanhope was sibbe to hym · as som men me tolde,
For Rechelesnesse in hus rybaudrie · ryht thus he seide,
'Go ich to helle, go ich to heuene · ich shal nouht go myn one!
Were hit al soth that 3e seyen · thou Scripture and Clergie,
Ich leyue neuere that lorde ne ladie · that lyueth her on erthe
Sholde sitte in godes sete · ne see god in hus blysse; 203
Ita impossibile est diuiti intrare in regnum celorum, sicut camelus foramen acus.

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189. mette P. 192. dayes IM; a daye PK. 195. recche IK; recchep PE (*wrongly*). 196. feer P. 199. rybaurdrie P. 200. go (*before* myn) IMFSGK; PE *om.* 202. eerthe P.

Poul prouith it is vnpossible · riche men in heuene,
Ac pore men in pacience · and penaunce togidere
Hauen eritage in heuene · ac riche men non.'—
'*Contra*,' quod I, 'be Crist! · that can I the wisse,
And prouen it be the pistil · that Petir is nempnid;
Qui crediderit et baptizatus fuerit, saluus erit.'
'That is *in extremis*,' quod Scripture · 'as Sarisines and Iewis
Mowe be sauid so · and so is oure beleue;
That an vncristene in that cas · may cristene an hethene,
And for his lele beleue · whanne he his lif tyneth,
Haue eritage in heuene · as an hei3 Cristene.

Poule preueth it inpossible · riche men to haue heuene,
Salamon seith also · that syluer is worst to louye:
Nichil iniquius quam amare peccuniam.
And Caton kenneth vs to coueiten it · nau3t but as nede techeth,
Dilige denarium, set parce dilige formam.
And patriarkes and prophetes · and poetes bothe
Wryten to wissen vs · to wilne no ricchesse,
And preyseden pouerte with pacience; · the apostles bereth witnesse,
That thei han heritage in heuene · and bi trewe ri3te,
There riche men no ri3te may clayme · but of reuthe and grace.'
'*Contra*,' quod I, 'bi Cryste · that can I repreue,
And preue it bi Peter · and bi Poule bothe,
That is baptized beth sauf · be he riche or pore.'
'That is *in extremis*,' quod Scripture · 'amonges Saracenes and Iewes;
Thei mowen be saued so · and that is owre byleue,
That an vncristene in that cas · may crysten an hethen,
And for his lele byleue · whan he the lyf tyneth,
Haue the heritage of heuene · as any man Crystene.
Ac Crysten men with-oute more · may nou3t come to heuene,
For that Cryst for Cristen men deyde · and confermed the lawe,
That who-so wolde and wylneth · with Cryste to aryse,
Si cum Christo surrexistis, etc.,
He shulde louye and leue · and the lawe fulfille.
That is—"loue thi lorde god · leuest aboue alle,
And after, alle Crystene creatures · in comune, eche man other;"
And thus bilongeth to louye · that leueth to be saued.
And but we do thus in dede · ar the daye of dome,

Ac Cristene men, god wot · comith not so to heuene;
For Cristene han a degre · and is the comune speche,
Dilige deum, etc., et proximum tuum sicut teipsum.
Godis word witnessith we shuln ȝiue · and dele oure enemys,
And alle men that arn nedy · as pore men and suche,
Dum tempus est, operemur bonum ad omnes, maxime autem ad domesticos fidei.
Alle kynne creatures · that to Crist beleuith
We be holde heiȝly · to herie and honoure,
And ȝiuen hem of oure good · as good as oure seluen,
And souereynliche to suche · that sewen oure beleue;

[*Not in* C-*text.*]

A. 232. That oon U; That arn TH_2; *read* That an. 238. as H_2U; and T; D *om.* **B.** 336. to WOB; LRC *om.*

That is, iche Cristene man · be kynde to other,
And sithen hem to helpe · in hope hem to amende.
To harme hem ne slen hem · god hi3te vs neuere;
For he seith it hym-selfe · in his ten hestis,
Non mecaberis, ne sle nou3t · is the kynde Englissh,
For, *Michi vindictam, et ego retribuam;*
I shal punisshen in purcatory · or in the put of helle
Eche man for his misdede · but mercy it make.'
'3et am I neuere the ner · for nou3t I haue walkid
To wyte what is Do-wel · witterly in herte;
For how I werche in this world · wrong other ellis,

It shal bisitten vs ful soure · the siluer that we kepen,
And owre bakkes that moth-eten be · and sen beggers go naked,
Or delyte in wyn and wylde foule · and wote any in defaute.
For euery Cristene creature · shulde be kynde til other,
And sithen hethen to helpe · in hope of amendement.
God hoteth bothe heigh and lowe · that no man hurte other,
And seith, "slee nou3t that semblable is · to myne owen liknesse,
But if I sende the sum tokne"; · and seith, *non mecaberis*,
Is, slee nou3t, but suffre · and al for the beste.
For, *Michi vindictam, et ego retribuam.*
"For I shal punysshen hem in purgatorie · or in the putte of helle,
Vche man for his mysdedes · but mercy it lette."'
'This is a longe lessoun,' quod I · 'and litel am I the wyser;
Where Dowel is, or Dobet · derkelich 3e shewen;
Many tales 3e tellen · that Theologye lerneth;
And that I man made was · and my name yentred
In the legende of lyf · longe er I were,
Or elles vnwriten for somme wikkednesse · as holywrit wytnesseth,
Nemo ascendit ad celum, nisi qui de celo descendit.
I leue it wel,' quod I, 'bi owre lorde · and on no letterure bettere.
For Salamon the sage · that Sapience tau3te,
God gaf hym grace of witte · and alle his godes after,
To reule the reume · and riche to make;
He demed wel and wysely · as holy writte telleth.
Aristotle and he · who wissed men bettere?
Maistres that of goddis mercy · techen men and prechen,
Of here wordes thei wissen vs · for wisest as in here tyme,
And al holicherche · holdeth hem bothe ydampned!

I was markid, withoute mercy · and myn name entrid
In the legende of lif · longe er I were;
Or ellis vndir-writen for wykkid · as witnessith the gospel,
Nemo ascendet ad celum nisi qui de celo descendit.
And I leue on oure lord · and on no lettrure betere;
For Salamon the sage · that Sapience made,
God ȝaf hym grace · and richesse to-gidere
For to reule his reaum · riȝt at his wille;
Dede he not wel and wisly · as holy chirche techith,
Bothe in werke and in woord · in world in his tyme?
Aristotle and he · who wrouȝte betere?
And al holy chirche · holden hem in helle!

For Clergie seith that he seih · in the seynt euangelie,
That ich man maked was · and my name y-entred
In the legende of lif · longe er ich were.
Predestinat thei prechen · prechours that this shewen,
Or prechen inparfit · ypult out of grace,
Vnwryten for som wikkednesse · as holy writ sheweth,
Nemo ascendit in celum nisi qui de celo descendit.
Ich leyue hit wel, by oure lorde · and no lettrure bettere.
For Salomon the sage · that Sapience made,
God gaf hym grace of wit · and of good after,
Neuere to man so muche · that man can of telle,
To rewele alle reames · and ryche to make,
And deme wel and wislyche · wommen bereth witnesse;
Non michi nec tibi, sed diuidatur.
Aristotle and he · hij tauhten men bothe;
Maisters that techen men · of godes muchel mercy
Witnessen that here wordes · and here werkes bothe
Weren wonder goode · and wise in here tyme,
And holychurche, as ich huyre · haldeth bothe in helle!

A. 247. *Non* UD; *ne* TH_2. *mecaberis* (so in all MSS.) 252. wrong UD; TH_2 *om.* 258. hym UD; hem TH_2. **B.** 361. It WCROB; I L (*line marked.*) 369. For—*retribuam* in R *only*; *cf.* Text A; *and see* l. 204. 377. *decendit* L. 381. *This line is in* R only. **C.** 205. yentrede P. 207. Prodestinat P. 218. Whitnessen P.

And was there neuere in this world · to wysere of werkis;
For alle cunnynge clerkis · siththe Crist ȝede on erthe
Taken ensaumples of here sawis · in sarmonis that thei maken,
And be here werkis and here wordis · wissen vs to Dowel;

And if I shulde worke bi here werkes · to wynne me heuene,
That for her werkes and witte · now wonyeth in pyne,
Thanne wrouȝte I vnwysely · what-so euere ȝe preche.

Ac of fele witty in feith · litel ferly I haue,
Though her goste be vngraciouse · god for to plese.
For many men on this molde · more sette here hertis
In good than in god · for-thi hem grace failleth,
At here moste myschief · whan thei shal lyf lete.
As Salamon dede, and such other · that shewed gret wittes;
Ac her werkes, as holy wrytte seyth · was euere the contrarye.
For-thi wyse witted men · and wel ylettred clerkes,
As thei seyen hem-self · selden done ther-after,
Super cathedram Moysy, etc.,
Ac I wene it worth of many · as was in Noes tyme,
Tho he shope that shippe · of shides and bordes;
Was neuere wriȝte saued that wrouȝt ther-on · ne other werkman elles,
But briddes and bestes · and the blissed Noe,
And his wyf with his sones · and also here wyues;
Of wriȝtes that it wrouȝte · was none of hem ysaued.
God leue it fare nouȝt so bi folke · that the feith techen
Of holicherche, that herberwe is · and goddes hous to saue,
And shelden vs fram shame ther-inne · as Noes shippe did bestes;
And men that maden it · amydde the flode adreynten.
The *culorum* of this clause · curatoures is to mene,
That ben carpenteres holykirke to make · for Crystes owne bestes,
Homines et iumenta saluabis, domine, etc.

B. 398. *cathedra* LWCB. 406. herberwe WCOB; heberwe L. C. 232. meste P. 236. Seilde P. 237. vntriwe P. *sederunt*; in F only. 238. Ac IMFKGS; And PE. 239. schip IMFSE; shup P. 240. writ P;

And ȝif I shal werke be here werkis · to wynne me heuene,
And for here werkis and for here wyt · wende to pyne,
Thanne wrouȝte I vnwisly · with alle the wyt that I lere!

Yf we sholden worchen after here workes · to wynnen ous heuene,
That for hure werkes and witt · wonyeth now in peyne,
Then wroghte we vnwisliche · for al ȝoure wyse techynge.
Ac ich countresegge the nat, Cleregie · ne thy connynge, Scripture;
That ho so doth by ȝoure doctrine · doth wel, ich leyue.
Ac me were leuere, by oure lorde · a lippe of godes grace
Than al the kynde witt that ȝe can bothe · and connynge of ȝoure bokes.
For of fele witty, in faith · litel ferly ich haue,
Thauh here gost be vngraciouse · god for to plese.
For meny men of this molde · setten more here herte
In worldliche good than in god · for-thy grace hem failleth.
At here moste meschef · mercy were the beste;
And mercy of mercy · needes mot aryse,
As holy writ wittnesseth · godes word in the godspelle;
Eadem mensura qua mensi fueritis, remecietur uobis.
Ryght wel ywittede men · and wel lettred clerkes,
Selde arn thei seien · so lyue as thei lere;
Witnesse on godes wordes · that was neuere vntrewe:
Super cathedram Moysi sederunt, etc.
Ac ich wene hit worth of menye · as was in Noes tyme,
Tho that he shop the schip · of shides and of bordes,
Was neuere wright that ther-on wrouhte · ne workman y-saued,
Bote briddes and bestes · and the blessed Noe,
And hus wif with hus sones · and hus sones wyues;
Of wrightes that hit wroughten · was non ysaued.
God leyue hit fare not so by folke · that the faith techen
Of holychurche, that sholde kepe · alle Cristine saules;
For *archa Noe*, nymeth hede · ys no more to mene
Bote holychurche, herbergh · to alle that ben blessede.
The *culorum* of this clause · curatores ys to mene,
That ben carpenters vnder Criste · holy kirke to make
For lewede folke, godes foules · and hus free bestes;
Homines et iumenta saluabis, domine, etc.

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see l. 243. 241. and the IMFSKG; þat the PE. 243. Of IMFSKG; And PE. 246. nemeþ P. 248. cause P. 249. kirke I; churche P.

A Goode Friday, I fynde · a feloun was sauid
That hadde lyued al his lyf · with lesinges and theftis;
And for he kneuȝ on the crois · and to Crist shref hym,
Sonnere hadde he saluacion · thanne seint Ion the baptist,
Ar Adam or Ysaye · or any of the prophetis,
That hadde leyn with Lucifer · manye longe ȝeris;
A robbere hadde remission · rathere thanne thei alle,

At domes-day the diluuye worth · of deth and fyr at ones;
For-thi I conseil ȝow clerkes · of holy cherche the wriȝtes,
Wercheth ȝe werkes as ȝe seen i-write · lest ȝe worth nauȝt ther-inne.
On Gode Fridaye I fynde · a feloun was ysaued,
That had lyued al his lyf · with lesynges and with thefte;
And for he biknewe on the crosse · and to Cryste schrof hym,
He was sonnere saued · than seynt Iohan the baptiste,
And or Adam or Ysaye · or eny of the prophetes,
That hadde yleine with Lucyfer · many longe ȝeres.
A robbere was yraunceouned · rather than thei alle,
With-outen any penaunce of purgatorie · to perpetuel blisse.
Thanne Marye Magdaleyne · what womman dede worse?
Or who worse than Dauid · that Vries deth conspired?
Or Poule the apostle · that no pitee hadde,
Moche crystene kynde · to kylle to deth?
And now ben thise as souereynes · wyth seyntes in heuene,
Tho that wrouȝte wikkedlokest · in worlde tho thei were.
And tho that wisely wordeden · and wryten many bokes
Of witte and of wisdome · with dampned soules wonye.
That Salamon seith, I trowe be soth · and certeyne of vs alle,
Sunt iusti atque sapientes; et opera eorum in manu dei sunt, etc.;
There aren witty and wel-libbynge · ac her werkes ben yhudde
In the hondes of almiȝty god · and he wote the sothe
Wher for loue a man worth allowed there · and his lele werkes,
Or elles for his yuel wille · and enuye of herte,
And be allowed as he lyued so; · for bi lyther, men knoweth the gode;

A. 283. none U; non DH_2; now T. 285, 286. *These two lines are corruptly given in all the MSS.* I correct them. **B.** 411, 413. *These lines are in* R *only. Cf.* C-Text. diluuye, *from* MS. Camb. Univ. Lib. Ff. 5. 35; deluye R (*wrongly*). fyr, *from* MS. Ff.; R *has* feer. 417. þe WCROB;

Withoute penaunce of purcatorie · to haue paradis for euere.
Thanne Marie the Maudeleyn · who miȝte do wers?
Or who dede wers thanne Dauid · that Vrie destroyede?
Or Poule the apostil · that no pite ne hadde,
Cristene kynde · to kille to dethe?
And arn none for sothe · souereynes in heuene,
As thise that wrouȝte wykkidly · in world whanne thei were.
And ȝet I forget ferthere · of fyue wyttis techinge,

At domes day a dyluuye worth · of deth and fuyr at ones;
Worcheth, ȝe wryghtes of holichurche · as holy writ techeth,
Lest ȝe be loste as the laborers were · that labored vnder Noe.
A Goode Fryday, ich fynde · a felon was ysaued,
That vnlawefulliche hadde ylyued · al hus lyf-tyme;
And for he by-knew on the crois · and to Crist schrof hym,
He was sonnere ysaued · than seynt Iohan the Baptist,
And er Adam other Ysaie · other eny of the prophetes,
That hadden leye with Lucyfer · meny longe ȝeres.
A robber was y-raunsoned · rather than thei alle;
With-oute penaunce other passion · other eny other peyne
He passede forth pacientliche · to perpetuel blisse.
Al-so Marie Magdelene · ho myghte do worsse
As in lykynge of lecherye · no lyf denyede?
And Dauid the douhty · that deuynede how Vrye
Mighte slilokeste be slayn · and sente hym tó werre
Leelliche as by hus lok · with a lettere of gyle;
Paul the apostel, that no pite hadde · Cristene peuple to culle;
Now beeth these seintes, as men seyen · and souereynes in heuene,
Tho that worst wroghten · while thei weren here.
By that that Salamon seith · hit semeth that no wyght
Wot ho is worthi · for wele other for wicke,
Whether he is worthi to wele · other to wickede pyne:
Sunt iusti atque sapientes, et opera eorum in manu dei sunt.
Thus ich, Rechelesnesse, haue rad · registres and bokes,
And fond ich neuere, in faith · for to telle treuthe,

L *om.* 426. now WCOB; LR *om.* 430. *Sunt* R; *siue* LCOW.
C. 251. of fuyr P; *but* IMSKG *om.* of. 254. ysauede P. 256. schrof EMIFS; schroue P. 261. With-outhe P. 264. denoyede P. 268. crustene P. 269. þees P. 275. of treuthe P; *but* MFSEK *om.* of.

That Clergie of Cristis mouth · comendit was euer;
For he seide it hym-selfe · to summe of his disciplis,
Cum steteritis ante presides, nolite cogitare quid loquamini;
And is as muche to mene · to men that ben lewid,
"Whether ȝe ben aposid of princes · or of prestis of the lawe,
For to answere hem · haue ȝe no doute;
For I shal graunte ȝow grace · of god that ȝe seruen,
The help of the holy gost · to answere hem at wille."
The douȝtiest doctour · or dyuynour of the trinite,

And wherby wote men whiche is whyte · if alle thinge blake were,
And who were a gode man · but if there were some shrewe?
For-thi lyue we forth with lither men · I leue fewe ben gode.
For *gant* OPORTET *vyent en place · yl ny ad que* PATI,
And he that may al amende · haue mercy on vs alle!
For sothest worde that euere god seyde · was tho he seyde,
nemo bonus.
Clergye tho of Crystes mouth · commended was it litel,
For he seyde to seynt Peter · and to suche as he loued,
Dum steteritis ante reges et presides, etc.;
"Though ȝe come bifor kynges · and clerkes of the lawe,
Beth nouȝte abasched · for I shal be in ȝoure mouthes,
And ȝyue ȝow witte at wille · and kunnynge to conclude
Hem alle that aȝeines ȝow · of Crystenedome disputen."
Dauyd maketh mencioun · he spake amonges kynges,
And miȝte no kynge ouercome hym · as bi kunnyng of speche.
But witte ne wisdome · wan neuere the maystrye,
Whan man was at myschief · with-oute the more grace.
The doughtiest doctour · and deuynoure of the trinitee,
Was Augustyn the olde · and heighest of the foure,
Sayde thus in a sarmoun · I seigh it writen ones,
Ecce ipsi idioti rapiunt celum, vbi nos sapientes in inferno mergimur:
And is to mene to Englisshe men · more ne lasse,
"Aren none rather yrauysshed · fro the riȝte byleue
Than ar this cunnynge clerkes · that conne many bokes;
Ne none sonner saued · ne sadder of bileue,
Than plowmen and pastoures · and pore comune laboreres."

A. 287. *Cum* U; *Dum* TH_2D; *quid loquamini* in U only.

That Austyn the olde · and hiȝeste of the foure,
Seide this for a sarmoun · (so me god helpe!)
Ecce ipsi ydioti rapiunt celum, vbi nos sapientes in infernum mergemur;
And is to mene in oure mouth · more ne lesse,
"Arn none rathere yrauisshid · fro the riȝte beleue
Thanne arn thise grete clerkis · that conne many bokis;
Ne none sonnere ysauid · ne saddere of consience,
Thanne pore peple as plouȝmen · and pastours of bestis."

That Clergie of Cristes mouth · comended was euere.
For Crist seide to seintes · and to suche as he louede,
Dum steteritis ante reges et presides, nolite cogitare quomodo aut quid loquamini, et cetera:
"Thauh ȝe come by-fore kynges · and clerkes of the lawe,
Beeth nat a-ferd of that folke · for ich shal ȝeue ȝow tonge,
Connynge and clergie · to conclude hem alle."
Dauid maketh mencion · he spak among kynges,
And myghte no kynge hym ouer-come · as in connynge speche.
Sothly,' seide Rechelesnesse · 'ich see by menye euydences,
That nother wit ne wyghtnesse · wan neuere the maistrie
With-oute the grete gyfte of god · with hus grace and fortune.
For he that most seih and seide · of the sothfast trinite
Was Austyn the olde · that euere man wiste.
He saide thus in hus sarmon · for ensample of grete clerkes,
Ecce ipsi idioti rapiunt celum, vbi nos sapientes in inferno mergimur.
This is to mene no more · to men that ben lewede,
"Aren none rathere raueshed · fro the ryghte by-leyue
Cominliche than clerkes · most knowynge and connynge;
And none sonnere ysaued · ne saddere in the by-leyue
Than plouhmen and pastours · and poure comune peuple;"

C. 277. *nolite, &c.* EFS; P *om.* 283. euedences P. 286. seih (*for* seih) PEFKG; say S; si M; *see* l. 154.

Souteris and seweris · suche lewide Iottis
Percen with a *pater-noster* · the paleis of heuene,

Souteres and shepherdes · suche lewed Iottes
Percen with a *pater-noster* · the paleys of heuene,
And passen purgatorie penaunceles · at her hennes-partynge,
In-to the blisse of paradys · for her pure byleue,
That inparfitly here · knewe and eke lyued.
  ȝee men knowe clerkes · that han cursed the tyme,
That euere thei couth or knewe more · than *credo in deum patrem ;*
And pryncipaly her *pater-noster* · many a persone hath wisshed.
  I se ensamples my-self · and so may many an other,
That seruauntes that seruen lordes · selden falle in arrerage,
But tho that kepen the lordes catel · clerkes and reues.
Riȝt so lewed men · and of litel knowynge,
Selden falle thei so foule · and so fer in synne,
As clerkes of holikirke · that kepen Crystes tresore,
The which is mannes soule to saue · as god seith in the gospel:
  Ite vos in vineam meam.'[1]

B. 460. shepherdes W; sheperdes L.

[1 *For the continuation of the* B-text, *see* p. 330.]

Withoute penaunce, at here partynge · in-to heiȝe blisse!
Breuis oracio penetrat celum.'

And lewede leele laborers · and land-tylynge peuple
Persen with a *pater-noster* · paradys other heuene,
Passinge purgatorie penaunceles · for here parfit by-leyue; 296
Breuis oratio penetrat celum.

Selde falleth the seruant · so deepe in arerages
As doth the reyue other the conterroller · that rekene mot and a-counte
Of al that thei hauen had · of hym that is here maister.
Ac these lewede laborers · of lytel vnderstondynge 300
Selde fallen so foule · and so deepe in synne
As clerkes of holy churche · that kepen sholde and saue
Lewede men in good by-leyue · and lene hem at here neede.[1]

C. 297. arrirages P. 299. hadd P. 300. þees P.

[1 *For the continuation of the* C-text, *see* p. 331.]

PASSUS XII.

[*MS. Rawl. Poet.* 137; *fol.* 40. *Various Readings from* U. = Univ. Coll. Oxf., *and* Ing. = Ingilby MS.]

Passus tercius de Dowel.

'CRIST wot,' quod Clergie · 'knowe hit ȝif the lyke,
I haue do my deuer · the Dowel to teche;
And who-so coueyteth don betere · than the boke telleth,
He passeth the apostolis lyf · and put him to aungelys!
But I se now, as I seye · as me soth thinkyth,
The were lef to lerne · but loth for to stodie.
Thou woldest konne that I can · and carpen hit after,
Presumptuowsly, parauenture · a-pose so manye,
That hit myȝthe turne me to tene · and Theologie bothe.
ȝif I wiste witterly · thou woldest don ther-after,
Al that thou askest · a-soylen I wolde.'
Skornfully tho Scripture · set vp here browes,
And on Clergie criede · on Cristes holy name,
That he shewe me hit ne sholde · but ȝif I schriuen were
Of the kynde cardinal wit · and cristned in a font;—
And seyde hit so loude · that shame me thouȝte,
'That hit were bothe skathe · and sklaundre to holy cherche,
Sitthe Theologie the trewe · to tellen hit defendeth;
Dauid godes derling · defendyth hit al-so:
Vidi preuaricantes et tabescebam:

[*Not in* B-*text.*]

A. 3. coueite to don U; couetyth bene Ing. 4. U *om.* the. peryth (*for* put him) Ing. 5. thinkyth Ing.; thinkyt3 Rawl. 6. leue for to Ing. U *omits this line.* 9. it U; Rawl. Ing. *omit.* me Ing. U; Rawl. me*n* (*wrongly*). 12. tho Ing. U; þe Rawl. set vp here U; schet vp her Ing.; sherte vp his (!) Rawl. 13. cryede U; criyd Ing.; crieþ Rawl. 14. I schriuen Ing.; it stryf U; stryf Rawl. (*corruptly*). 15. U *om.* kynde. Ing. *om.* wit. 16. *For* hit U *has* it; Ing. Rawl. *om.* hit. thou3the Rawl. 17. Ing. U *om.* bothe. Ing. *inserts* al *before* holy. 18. that trewe is U; that true is Ing. (*for* the trewe). 19. *preuaricantes* Ing. U; *preuaricationes* Rawl. (*corruptly*). (U ends with the word *tabescebam*, which the author evidently construes as if it were *tacebam*.) 22. precheth Rawl.; preched Ing.

"I saw synful," he seyde · "ther-fore I seyde no-thing,"
Til tho wrecches ben in wil · here synne to lete.
And Poul precheth hit often · prestes hit redyn,
Audiui archana uerba, que non licet homini loqui:
"I am not hardy," quod he · "that I herde with erys,
Telle hit with tounge · to synful wrecches."
And god graunted hit neuere · the gospel hit witnesseth,
In the passioun, whan Pilat · a-posed god al-myȝti,
And asked Iesu on hy · that herden hit an hundred,
"*Quid est ueritas?*" quod he · "verilyche tel vs;"
God gaf him non answere · but gan his tounge holde.
Riȝt so I rede,' quod she · 'rede thou no ferther;
Of that he wolde wite · wis him no betere.
For he cam not by cause · to lerne to Dowel,
But as he seyth, such I am · when he with me carpeth.'
And when Scripture the skolde · hadde this skile y-sheued,
Clergie in-to a caban · crepte anon after,
And drow the dore after him · and bad me go Dowel,
Or wycke, ȝif I wolde · whether me lyked!
Than held I vp myn handes · to Scripture the wise,
To be hure man, ȝif I most · for euere-more after,
With that she wolde me wisse · wher the toun were,
That Kynde Wit the confessour · hure cosyn, was inne.
That lady than low · and lauȝte me in here armes,
And sayde, 'my cosyn Kynde Wit · knowen is wel wide,
And his loggyng is with Lyf · that lord is of erthe.
And ȝif thou desyre · with him for to a-byde,
I shal the wisse wynlyche · where that he dwelleth.'

[*Not in* C-*text.*]

archana uerba Ing.; *archane* Rawl. (*corruptly*). 23. Ing. *inserts* of *before* that. 24. wrecches Rawl.; schrewys Ing. 25. Ing. *om.* 1*st* hit. 26. whan Rawl.; how Ing. 26. -myȝthi Rawl. 27. that Rawl.; ther Ing. 30. red Rawl.; rede Ing. (*twice*). 31. wolde Rawl.; ȝernyth to Ing. wis Rawl.; wysse Ing. 32. can nouth be cause Ing. 33. als ho Ing.; as he Rawl.; *read* as ho? Iangelyth Ing. (*for* carpeth). 34. thus wyt Rawl.; this scole Ing. (*read* this skile). 35. Ing. *om.* a. crepe Ing. 36. to Ing. (*for* after). 37. wykly Ing. qwethir that me Ing. 41. That Ing.; Rawl. *om.* the Ing.; hure Rawl. (*wrongly*). cosyn Rawl.; kynnysman Ing. 42. lowhe on me Ing. lauȝthe Rawl.; lawht Ing. 43. wel Rawl.; ful Ing. 44. his loggyng is Rawl.; is lyggyng Ing. 45. a-byde Rawl.; dwelle Ing. 46. wynlyche Ing.; Rawl. *om.*

And thanne I kneled on my knes · and kyste her wel sone,
And thanked hure a thousand sythes · with throbbant herte.
She called [to ken] me · a clerioun that hy3te
Omnia-probate · a pore thing with-alle,
'Thou shalt wende with Wil,' quod she · 'whiles that him lykyth,
Til 3e come to the burghe · *quod-bonum-est-tenete.*
Ken him to my cosenes hous · that Kinde Wit hy3te,
Sey I sente him this segge · and that he shewe hym Dowel.'
Thus we lau3te oure leue · lowtyng at onys,
And wente forth on my way · with *omnia-probate,*
And ere I cam to the court · *quod-bonum-est-tenete,*
Many ferlys me by-fel · in a fewe 3eris.
The fyrste ferly I fond · a-fyngrid me made;
As I 3ede thurgh 3outhe · a-3en prime dayes,
I stode stille in a stodie · and stared a-bowte;
'Al hayl,' quod on tho, and I answered 'welcome · and with whom be 3e?'
'I am dwellyng with Deth · and Hunger I hatte,
To Lyf in his lordshepe · longyth my weye,
To kyllyn him 3if I can · theigh Kynde Wit helpe;
I shal felle that freke · in a fewe dayes!'
'I wolde folwe the fayn,' quod I · 'but feyntise me henteth,
Me folweth such a feyntise · I may no ferther walke.'
'Go we forth,' quod the gome · 'I haue a gret boyste
At my bak, of broke bred · thi bely for to fylle;
A bagge ful, of a beggere · I bou3te hit at onys.'
Than maunged I with him · vp to the fulle,

[*Not in* B-*text.*]

A. 47. wel Rawl.; fete Ing. 48. A thowsyng (*sic*) tymes I thankyd hire with throbbyng hert Ing. 49. *I insert* to ken (*which both* MSS. *omit*) *to complete the sense and metre.* hy3t Rawl.; hite Ing. 51. whiles that Rawl.; qwyl Ing. 52. bowhe (*for* borowhe) Ing. 53. hy3th Rawl.; hite Ing. 55. lau3þe Rawl. (*read* lau3te); Ing. *om. this line.* 56. And Rawl.; I Ing. on Rawl.; in Ing. 57. And Rawl.; Ing. *om.* court Rawl.; cuntreyys Ing. 59. a-fyngrid Rawl.; an hunger-it Ing. 60. As I 3ede Rawl.; And I than Ing. 3owthe Ing.; *miswritten* 3ou · þe Rawl. 62. and I answered Rawl.; I seyd Ing. 63. hatte Rawl.; hyte Ing. 64. in Rawl.; and Ing. longyth Ing.; longyt Rawl. 65. *From* Ing.; Rawl. *omits.* *For* theigh, Ing. *has* thei (*badly*). 67. quod I Ing.; Rawl. *om.* fentesye Rawl.; fayntys Ing.; *read* feyntise, *as in* A. v. 5, B. v. 5. hentith Ing.; hendeþ Rawl.; *read* henteth. 68. fentyse Rawl.; fayntyse Ing.; *see above.* no ferther Rawl.; not forth Ing.

For myssyng of mete · no mesour I coude,
But ete as Hunger me hete · til my belly swellyd.
Ther bad me Hunger 'haue gode day!' · but I helde me stille;
For gronyng of my guttys · I durst gon no ferther.
With that cam a knaue · with a confessoures face,
Lene and rewlyche · with leggys ful smale.
He halsed me, and I · asked him after,
Of whennes that he were · and wheder that he wolde.
'With Deth I duelle,' quod he · 'dayes and nyȝtes;
Mi name is Feuere; on the ferthe day · I am a-first euere;
I am messager of Deth · men haue I tweyne,
That on is called Cotidian · a courour of oure hous,
Tercian that other · trewe drinkeres bothe!
We han letteres of Lyf · he shal his lyf tyne;
Fro Deth, that is oure duk · swyche dedis we brynge.'
'Myȝte I so,' quod I, 'god wot · ȝoure gates wolde I holden.'
'Nay, Wil!' quod that wyȝt · 'wend thou no ferther,
But lyue as this lyf · is ordeyned for the;
Thou tomblest with a trepget · ȝif thou my tras folwe;
And mannes merthe wrouȝte no mor · than he deseruyth here,
Whil his lyf and his lykhame · lesten to-gedere.
And ther-fore do after Do-wel · whil thi dayes duren,
That thi play be plentevous · in paradys with aungelys!
Thou shalt be lauȝt into lyȝt · with loking of an eye,
So that thou werke the word · that holy wryt techeth,
And be prest to preyeres · and profitable werkes!'
Wille [wiste] thurgh in-wit · (thou wost wel the sothe!)

[*Not in* C-*text.*]

69. gome Ing.; gom Rawl. 70. Of battys and broken bred Ing. Ing. *om.* for. 71. bouȝþe Rawl.; bowht Ing. 72. with him Ing.; wit Rawl. to Ing.; at Rawl. 73. Rawl. *inserts* the *after* For. 74–76. *These three lines are in* Ing. *only.* 78. *This line is in* Ing. *only.* 79. I haylsyd hym hendely · and axid him after Ing. 80. when Rawl; qwennys Ing.; *read* whennes. 82. a-threst Rawl.; athirst Ing.; *read* afirst. 83. masager Rawl.; mensenger Ing.; *read* messager. 86. tyne Ing.; tyme (*wrongly*) Rawl. 88. so Rawl.; *miswritten* se Ing. quod he (*obvious error for* quod I) Ing.; Rawl. *om.* MS. Ing. *ends with* l. 88. 88. Myȝth Rawl.; *read* Myȝte. 89. wyȝth Rawl.; *read* wyȝt. 92. wrouȝth Rawl. 96. lauȝth, lyȝth Rawl.; *read* lauȝt, lyȝt. 98–100. Unless the lines be spurious, these are the author's own words; he kills himself off, by way of finishing his poem, but he lived to rewrite it, nevertheless. 99. wiste *is supplied*; Rawl. *om.*

That this speche was spedelich · and sped him wel faste,
And wrouȝte that here is wryten · and other werkes bothe
Of Peres the Plowman · and mechel puple al-so;
And whan this werk was wrouȝt · ere Wille myȝte a-spie,

[*Continued from* p. 324.]

PASSUS XI.

Passus xj^us^.

THANNE Scripture scorned me and a skile tolde,
And lakked me in Latyne · and liȝte by me she sette,
And seyde, '*multi multa sciunt, et seipsos nesciunt.*'
Tho wepte I for wo · and wratth of her speche,
And in a wynkyng wratth · wex I aslepe.
A merueillouse meteles · mette me thanne,
That I was rauisshed riȝt there · and Fortune me fette,
And in-to the londe of Longynge · allone she me brouȝte,
And in a myroure that hiȝt Mydlerd · she mad me to biholde.
Sitthen she sayde to me · 'here myȝtow se wondres,
And knowe that thow coueytest · and come ther-to, par aunter.'
Thanne hadde Fortune folwyng hir · two faire damoyseles,
Concupiscencia-carnis · men called the elder mayde,
And Coueytise-of-eyes · ycalled was that other;
Pryde-of-parfyte-lyuynge · pursued hem bothe,
And badde me, for my contenaunce · acounte Clergye liȝte.
Concupiscencia-carnis · colled me aboute the nekke,
And seyde, 'thow art ȝonge and ȝepe · and hast ȝeres ynowe,
Forto lyue longe · and ladyes to louye;
And in this myroure thow myȝte se · myrthes ful manye,
That leden the wil to lykynge · al thi lyf-tyme.'
The secounde seide the same · 'I shal suwe thi wille;
Til thow be a lorde and haue londe · leten the I nelle,
That I ne shal folwe thi felawship · if Fortune it lyke.'
'He shal fynde me his frende' · quod Fortune ther-after;
'The freke that folwed my wille · failled neuere blisse.'

A. 101. wrouȝthe Rawl.; *read* wrouȝte. *This line means that, besides the* Vita de Dowel, Dobet, et Dobest, *the author wrote* Piers the Plowman. After

Deth delt him a dent · and drof him to the erthe,
And is closed vnder clom · Crist haue his soule!

Explicit Dowel.

[*Continued from* p. 325.]

Thanne Scripture scorned me · and many skyles shewede,
And contynaunce made to Clergie · to congie me, hit semede,
And lakkede me in Latyn · and lyght by me sette,
And seide, '*multi multa sapiunt, et seipsos nesciunt.*'
Tho wepte ich for wo · and wrathede of here wordes,
And in a wynkynge ich worth · and wonderliche ich mette.
For ich was raueshed ryght ther; · Fortune me fette,
In-to the londe of Longynge · and Loue hue me brouhte,
And in a myrour, hihte Myddelerd · hue made me to loke,
And sutthe seide to me · 'her myghte thou see wondres,
And knowe that thow coueitest · and come ther-to, paraunter.'
From C. xii. 163–187 (p. 311). Thenne hadde Fortune folwynge hure · two faire maidenes,
Concupiscentia-carnis · me calde the eldere mayde,
And Couetyse-of-eyen · ycald was that othere.
And Pruyde-of-parfit-lyuynge · pursewede me faste,
And bad me for my contynence · counte Clergies lore lyght.
Concupiscentia-carnis · comfortyde me in thys wyse,
And seide, 'thow art ȝong and ȝep · and hast ȝeris ynowe
For to lyue longe · and ladyes to louye.
And in this mirour thow myȝt see · murthes ful menye,
That lede the wol to lykynge · al thy lyf-tyme.'
The secounde mayde seide · 'ich shal sewe thi wil;
Til thow be a lord of londe · leten the ich nelle,
That ich ne shal folwie thy felaushupe · yf Fortune lyke.'
'He shal fynde me hus frende' · quath Fortune her-after;
'That man that me lyketh helpe · myghte nat myshappe.'

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line 105, twelve more lines are added by a certain Johan But, who mentions king Richard as being still alive.

Thanne was there one that hi3te Elde · that heuy was of chere,
'Man,' quod he, 'if I mete with the · bi Marie of heuene,
Thow shalt fynde Fortune the faille · at thi moste nede,
And *Concupiscencia-carnis* · clene the forsake.
Bitterliche shaltow banne thanne · bothe dayes and ni3tes
Couetyse-of-eyghe · that euere thow hir knewe,
And Pryde-of-parfyt-lyuynge · to moche peril the brynge.'
'3ee, recche the neuere,' quod Recchelesnes · stode forth in ragged clothes,
'Folwe forth that Fortune wole · thow hast wel fer til elde;
A man may stoupe tymes ynow · whan he shal tyne the croune.
"*Homo proponit*," quod a poete · and Plato he hyght,
"And *deus disponit*," quod he · "lat god done his wille."
If Trewthe wil witnesse it be wel do · Fortune to folwe,
Concupiscencia-carnis · ne Coueityse-of-eyes
Ne shal nou3t greue the gretly · ne bigyle the, but thow wolt.'
'3ee, farewel, Phippe!' quod Fauntelte · and forth gan me drawe,
Til *Concupiscencia-carnis* · acorded alle my werkes.

'Allas, eye!' quod Elde · and Holynesse bothe,
'That witte shal torne to wrecchednesse · for wille to haue his lykynge!'
Coueityse-of-eyghes · conforted me anon after,
And folwed me fourty wynter · and a fyfte more,
That of Dowel ne Dobet · no deyntee me ne thou3te;
I had no lykynge, leue me if the leste · of hem au3te to knowe.
Coueytyse-of-eyes · cam ofter in mynde
Than Dowel or Dobet · amonge my dedes alle.
Coueytise-of-eyes · conforted me ofte,
And seyde, 'haue no conscience · how thow come to gode;
Go confesse the to sum frere · and shewe hym thi synnes.
For whiles Fortune is thi frende · freres wil the louye,

B. 53. þe RCB; þee WO; L *om.*

Thenne was ther on hiht Elde · that heuy was of chere;
'Man,' quath Elde, 'mete ich with the · by Marie of heuene!
Thou shalt fynde Fortune · faile at thy moste neede,
And *Concupiscentia-carnis* · clene the for-sake!
Byterliche shalt thow banne thenne · bothe dayes and nyghtes
Couetyse-of-eyen · that euere thow hure knewe,
And Pruyde-of-parfit-lyuynge · to muche peril the brynge.'
'3e, recche the neuere,' quath Rechelesness · stod forth in raggede clothes,
'Folwe forth that Fortune wol · thou hast ful fer to elde;
A man may stoupe tyme ynowe · when he shal tyne the corone!'

From C. xii. 188–197 (p. 313).

"*Homo proponit*," quath a poete tho · and Plato he hihte,
"*Et deus disponit*," quath he · "let god do hus wille."
Al that Treuthe a-tacheth · and testifieth for goode,
Thauh thei folwe that Fortune wole · no folie ich hit holde.
And *Concupiscentia-carnis* · shal the nat greue
Gretlich, ne by-gyly the · bote yf thy-self wolle.'
'3e, farewel, Fyppe!' quath Fauntelet · and forth gan me drawe,
Til *Concupiscentia-carnis* · a-corded to alle my werkes.
Of Dowel ne o Dobet · no deynte me thouhte,
Clergie and hus consail · ich countede ful lytel!

Hic explicit passus secundus de Dowel.

PASSUS XIII.

Incipit passus tercius de Dowel.

'ALAS, eye!' quath Elde · and Holynesse bothe,
'That wit shal turne to wrecchednesse · for welthe hath al hus wil!'
Couetise-of-eyen · confortede me after,

And seide, 'Rechelesnesse · recche the neuere!
By so thow riche were · haue thow no conscience
How that thow come to good; · confesse the to som frere,
He shal a-soile the thus sone · how so thow euere wynne hit.
For while Fortune is thy frend · freres wollen the louye,

C. 304. a MFSEG; þe P. P. xiii. 7. so FTS; P *om.*

And fecche the to her fraternite · and for the biseke
To her priour prouyncial · a pardoun forto haue,
And preyen for the, pol bi pol · ȝif thow be *pecuniosus.*'
Set pena pecuniaria non sufficit pro spiritualibus delictis.
By wissynge of this wenche I wrouȝte · here wordes were so swete,
Tyl I forȝat ȝouthe · and ȝarn in-to elde.
And thanne was Fortune my foo · for al hir faire biheste,
And Pouerte pursued me · and put me lowe,
And tho fonde I the frere aferde · and flyttynge bothe,
Aȝeines owre firste forward · for I seyde I nolde
Be buryed at her hous · but at my parisshe cherche.
For I herde onys · how Conscience it tolde,
That there a man were crystened · by kynde he shulde be buryed,
Or where he were parisshene · riȝt there he shulde be grauen.
And for I seyde thus to freres · a fool thei me helden,
And loued me the lasse · for my lele speche.
Ac ȝet I cryed on my confessoure · that helde hym-self so kunnynge,
'By my feith, frere,' quod I · 'ȝe faren lyke thise woweres,
That wedde none wydwes · but forto welde here godis;
Riȝte so, by the rode · rouȝte ȝe neuere
Where my body were buryed · bi so ȝe hadde my siluer.
Ich haue moche merueille of ȝow · and so hath many an other,
Why ȝowre couent coueyteth · to confesse and to burye,
Rather than to baptise barnes · that ben catekumelynges.
Baptizyng and burying · bothe ben ful nedeful,
Ac moche more merytorie · me thynketh it is to baptize.
For a baptized man may · as maistres telleth,
Thorugh contricioun come · to the heigh heuene;
Sola contricio delet peccatum.
Ac a barne with-oute bapteme · may nouȝt so be saued;
Nisi quis renatus fuerit ex aqua, &c.;
Loke, ȝe lettred men · whether I lye or do nouȝte.'
And lewte loked on me · and I loured after.
'Wherfore lourestow?' quod Lewte · and loked on me harde,
'ȝif I durste,' quod I, 'amonges men · this meteles auowe!'

B. 57. *peccuniosus* L. *pecuniarea* L. 79. þynke L; þynkeþ WOR. 81. *delet peccatum* COB; *&c.* L. 82. *ex aqua, &c.* COB: L *om.*

And fastne the in here fraternite · and for the by-seche
To here priour prouincial · hus pardon to haue,
And praye for the, pol by pol · yf thow be pecunyous;
Pena pecuniaria non sufficit, et cet.'
By wissynge of this wenche ich dude · hure wordes were so swete,
Til ich for-ȝat ȝouthe · and ȝorn in-to elde.
Thenne was Fortune my foo · for al here fayre by-heste,
And Pouerte pursuwede me · and putte me to be lowe,
And flittynge fond ich the frere · that me confessede,

And seide, 'he myghte me nat a-soile · bote ich suluer hadde
To restitue resonabliche · for al vnryghtful wynnynge.'
'Owh! how!' quath ich tho · and myn hefd waggede,
'By my faith, frere,' quath ich · 'ȝe fare lik the wouwere
That wilneth the wydewe · bote for to wedde here goodes.
Ryght so, by the rode,' quath ich · 'rouhte the neuere
Wher my body yburied were · by so ȝe hadde my goodes!'

Thanne lowh Leaute · for ich lourede on the frere;
'Whi lourest thow?' quath Leaute · 'leue syre,' ich seide,
'For this frere flaterede me · while he fond me riche;
Now ich am poure and penyles · at litel prys he set me:
Ich wolde hit were no synne,' ich seide · 'to seye that were treuthe.

C. 11. pecunyous EMFSK; pecunius P. 13. ȝorn TK; ȝorne P. 25. leue EMSK; luue P. 26. thees (*for* this) P.

'ȝe, bi Peter and bi Poule,' quod he · 'and take hem bothe to witnesse,

Non oderis fratres secrete in corde tuo, set publice argue illos.'

'Thei wol alleggen also,' quod I · 'and by the gospel preuen,

Nolite iudicare quemquam.'

'And wher-of serueth lawe,' quod Lewte · 'if no lyf vndertoke it,

Falsenesse ne faytrye? · for sumwhat the apostle seyde,

Non oderis fratrem.

And in the sauter also · seithe Dauid the prophete,

Existimasti inique quod ero tui similis, &c.

It is *licitum* for lewed men · to segge the sothe,
If hem lyketh and leste · eche a lawe it graunteth,
Excepte persones and prestes · and prelates of holy cherche,
It falleth nouȝte for that folke · no tales to telle,
Though the tale were trewe · and it touched synne.
Thinge that al the worlde wote · wherfore shuldestow spare
To reden it in retoryke · to arate dedly synne?
Ac be neuere more the fyrste · the defaute to blame;
Thouȝe thow se yuel, sey it nouȝte fyrste · be sorye it nere amended.
No thinge that is pryue · publice thow it neuere,
Neyther for loue laude it nouȝt · ne lakke it for enuye;

Parum lauda, vitupera parcius.'

'He seith sothe,' quod Scripture tho · and skipte an heigh, and preched;

Ac the matere that she meued · if lewed men it knewe,
The lasse, as I leue · louyen it thei wolde.
This was her teme and her tyxte · I toke ful gode hede;
'*Multi* to a maungerye · and to the mete were sompned,
And whan the peple was plenere comen · the porter vnpynned the ȝate,
And plukked in *pauci* priueliche · and lete the remenaunt go rowme!'

Al for tene of her tyxte · trembled myn herte,
And in a were gan I waxe · and with my-self to dispute,

B. 98. To W; And LCROB.

The sauter seith hit is no synne · for suche men as ben trewe
For to seggen as thei seen · and saue onliche prestes;
Existimasti inique quod ero tui similis; arguam te, & statuam contra faciem tuam.
Thei wollen a-leggen al-so · and by the godspel preouen hit,
Nolite iudicare quemquam.'
'Wher-of serueth lawe,' quath Leaute · 'and no lyf vndertoke
Falsnesse ne faiterie? · for som-what the apostel seide,
Non oderis fratrem tuum secrete in corde tuo.
Thyng that al the worlde wot · where-fore sholdest thow spare
To rehercen hit by retoryk · to a-rate dedliche synne?
Ac be thow neuer the furste · the defaute to blame;
Thauh thow see, sey nat · som tyme, that is treuthe.
Thyng that wolde be pryue · publisshe thow hit neuere,
Nother for loue labbe hit out · ne lacke hit for non enuye;
Parum lauda, uitupera parcius.'
'He seith soth,' quath Scripture tho · and skypte an hy, and prechede,
Ac the matere that hue meeuede · yf lewede men hit knewe,
The lasse, as ich leyue · louye thei wolde
The by-leyue of oure lorde · that lettrede men techen.
Of here teme and of here tales · ich took ful good hede;
Hue seide in here sarmon · selcouthe wordes:—
'*Multi* to a mangerie · and to the mete were sompned,
And whan the peuple was plener come · the porter vnpynnede the gate,
And plyghte in *pauci* pryueliche · and leet the remenant go rome.'
Al for teene of here tixt · tremblede myn herte,
And in a weer gan ich wexe · and with my-selue to dispute

C. 33. *tuo* FST; P *om.* 40. tho ITSK; P *om.* 41. he (*for* hue, *wrongly*) P; *cf.* ll. 49, 72. 45. He (*for* Hue); *see above.*

Whether I were chosen or nou3t chosen; · on Holicherche I thou3te,
That vnderfonge me atte fonte · for one of goddis chosen;
For Cryste cleped vs alle · come if we wolde,
Sarasenes and scismatikes · and so he dyd the Iewes,
O vos omnes scicientes, venite, &c.;
And badde hem souke for synne · saufly at his breste,
And drynke bote for bale · brouke it who so my3te.
'Thanne may alle Crystene come,' quod I · 'and cleyme there entre
By the blode that he bou3te vs with · and thorugh baptesme after,
Qui crediderit & baptizatus fuerit, &c.
For though a Crystene man coueyted · his Crystenedome to reneye,
Ri3tfulliche to reneye · no resoun it wolde.
For may no cherle chartre make · ne his catel selle
With-outen leue of his lorde · no lawe wil it graunte.
Ac he may renne in arrerage · and rowme so fro home,
And as a reneyed caityf · recchelesly gon aboute;
Ac Resoun shal rekne with hym · and rebuken hym at the laste,
And Conscience a-counte with hym · and casten hym in arrerage,
And putten hym after in a prisone · in purgatorie to brenne,
For his arrerages rewarden hym there · to the daye of dome,

But if Contricioun wol come · and crye, bi his lyue,
Mercy for his mysdedes · with mouth or with herte.'
'That is soth,' seyde Scripture · 'may no synne lette
Mercy alle to amende · and mekenesse hir folwe,
For they beth as owre bokes telleth · aboue goddes werkes,
Misericordia eius super omnia opera eius.'
'3ee! baw for bokes!' quod one · was broken oute of helle,
Hi3te *Troianus*, had ben a trewe kny3te · toke witnesse at a pope,
How he was ded and dampned · to dwellen in pyne,
For an vncristene creature; · —'clerkis wyten the sothe,
That al the clergye vnder Cryste · ne mi3te me cracche fro helle,

But onliche loue and leaute · and my lawful domes.

B. 126, 127. and rebuken—acounte with hym *in* R *only*. 128. hym WROB; L *om.* 130. wel (*for* wol) L. 139. ne W; LCROB *om.*

Whether ich were chose other nat chose; · on Holy-churche ich thouhte,
That vnderfong me atte fount · for on of godes chosene.
'For Crist clepide ous alle · come yf we wolde,
Sarrasyns and scismatikes · and so he dude the Iewes,
And bad hem souken of hus brest · sauete for synne,
And drynke bote for bale · brouke hit ho so myghte;
O uos omnes sitientes, uenite ad aquas!
Thenne may alle Cristine come · and cleyme ther to entre
By that blod that he boughte ous with · and baptisme, as he tauhte,
Qui crediderit et baptizatus fuerit, saluus erit, &c. cetera.
For thauh a Crystine man coueytede · hus Crystendome to reneye,
Ryghtfulliche to reneye · no reson hit wolde.
For may no cherl a chartre make · ne hus catel selle
With-oute leue of the lorde · no lawe wolde hit graunte.
Ac he may renne in arerage · and rome fro home
As a recheles caitif · other reneyed, as hit semeth;
Ac Reson shal rekene with hym · and rebuke him atte laste,
And Conscience a-counte with hym · and caste him in arerages,
And putte hym thenne in prison · in purgatorie to brenne,
Rewardynge him ther for hus rechelesnesse · ryght to the day of dome,
Bote Contricion and Confession · crye, by hus lyue,
Mercy for hus mysdedes · with mouthe and with herte.'
'That is sothe,' seide Scripture · 'may no synne lette
Mercy, that hue nel al amende · yf meeknesse here folwe;
Thei bothe, as our bookes telleth · aren aboue godes werkes;
Misericordia eius super omnia opera eius.'
'Ye, baw for bookes!' quath on · was broken out of helle—
'Ich, *Troianus*, a trewe knyght · ich take witness of a pope,
How ich was ded, and dampned · to dwellen in helle
For an vncristene creature; · seynt Gregorie wot the sothe,
That al the Cristendome vnder Crist · ne myghte cracche me thennes,
Bote onliche loue and leaute · as in my lawes demynge!

C. 57. come IMTFS; P *om.* 58. *saluus erit* MFE; P *om.* 61. cheerl P. 62. With-ouhte P. 63. arerage KMS; arrirage P. 66. in MITSF; P *om.* 71. PE *insert* the *before* sothe. 73. bepe (*for* bope) P. 75. P *om. 2nd* a. 78. cracche MFSEK; cacche P.

Gregorie wist this wel · and wilned to my soule
Sauacioun, for sothenesse · that he seigh in my werkes.
And, after that he wepte · and wilned me were graunted
Grace, wyth-outen any bede-byddynge · his bone was vnderfongen,
And I saued, as ȝe may se · with-oute syngyng of masses; 145
By loue, and by lernynge · of my lyuyng in treuthe,
Brouȝte me fro bitter peyne · there no biddyng myȝte.'
'Lo, ȝe lordes, what leute did · by an emperoure of Rome,
That was an vncrystene creature · as clerkes fyndeth in bokes.
Nouȝt thorw preyere of a pope · but for his pure treuthe 150
Was that Sarasene saued · as seynt Gregorie bereth witnesse.
Wel ouȝte ȝe lordes, that lawes kepe · this lessoun to haue in mynde, 152
And on *Troianus* treuth to thenke · and do treuthe to the peple.
This matir is merke for mani of ȝow · ac, men of holy cherche,
The Legende *Sanctorum* ȝow lereth · more larger than I ȝow telle!
Ac thus lele loue · and lyuynge in treuthe 156
Pulte oute of pyne · a paynym of Rome.
I-blessed be treuthe · that so brak helle-ȝates,
And saued the Sarasyn · fram Sathanas and his power,
There no clergie ne couthe · ne kunnynge of lawes. 160
Loue and leute · is a lele science;
For that is the boke blessed · of blisse and of ioye:—
God wrouȝt it and wrot hit · with his on fynger,
And toke it Moyses vpon the mount · alle men to lere. 164
"Lawe with-outen loue," quod *Troianus* · "leye there a bene,
Or any science vnder sonne · the seuene artz and alle,
But if thei ben lerned for owre lordes loue · loste is alle the tyme:"—
For no cause to cacche siluer there-by · ne to be called a mayster,
But al for loue of owre lorde · and the bet to loue the peple. 169
For seynte Iohan seyde it · and soth aren his wordes,
"*Qui non diligit, manet in morte*—
Who so loueth nouȝte, leue me · he lyueth in deth-deyinge"—
And that alle manere men · enemys and frendes, 172
Louen her eyther other · and lene hem as her-selue.
Who so leneth nouȝte, he loueth nouȝte · god wote the sothe,
And comaundeth eche creature · to confourme hym to louye,

B. 154—164. *These* 11 *lines are in* R *only*.

Gregore wiste this wel · and wilnede to my soule
Sauacion, for the sothness · that he seih in myn werkes;
And for he wilnede wepynge · that ich were saued,
God of hus goodnesse · seih hus grete wil;
With-oute moo bedes-byddyng · hus bone was vnderfonge,
And ich ysaued, as ȝe may see · with-oute syngynge of masse.
Loue, withoute leel by-leyue · and my lawe ryghtful
Sauede me Sarrasyn · soule and body bothe.'
'Lo, lordes! what Leaute dude · and leel dom y-used!

Wel auhte ȝe lordes that lawes kepen · this lesson to haue in mynde,
And on *Troianus* treuthe to thenke · alle tymes of ȝoure lyue,
And louye for ȝoure lordes loue · and do leaute euere more.

For lawe with-oute leaute · leye ther a bene!
Other eny science vnder sonne · the seuene ars and alle,
Bote loue and leaute hem lede · y-lost is al the tyme
Of hym that traueleth ther-on · bote treuthe be hus lyuynge.
Lo, loue and leaute · been oure lordes bookes,
And Cristes owen cleregie · he cam fro heuene to teche hit,
And sitthe seynt Iohan · seide hit of hus techynge;
"*Qui non diligit, manet in morte:*"

C. 80. wist P. 86. with (*for* withoute) P. 94. hem METK; hym P. 95. hym SMFITK; hem PE. 98. hit is (*for* hit) P.

And souereynelyche pore poeple · and here ennemys after.
For hem that hateth vs · is owre meryte to louye,
And pore peple to plese; · here prayeres may vs helpe.
For owre ioye and owre hele · Iesu Cryst of heuene,
In a pore mannes apparaille · pursueth vs euere,
And loketh on vs in her liknesse · and that with louely chere,
To knowen vs by owre kynde herte · and castyng of owre eyen,
Whether we loue the lordes here · byfor owre lorde of blisse;
And exciteth vs bi the euangelye · that, when we maken festes,
We shulde nou3te clepe owre kynne ther-to · ne none kynnes riche;
" *Cum facitis conuiuia, nolite inuitare amicos;*
Ac calleth the careful ther-to · the croked and the pore,
For 3owre frendes wil feden 3ow · and fonde 3ow to quite
3owre festynge and 3owre faire 3ifte; · vche frende quyteth so other.
Ac for the pore I shal paye · and pure wel quyte her trauaille,
That 3iueth hem mete or moneye · and loueth hem for my sake."
For the best ben somme riche · and somme beggers and pore.
For alle are we Crystes creatures · and of his coffres riche,
And bretheren as of o blode · as wel beggares as erles.
For on Caluarye of Crystes blode · Crystenedome gan sprynge,
And blody bretheren we bycome there · of o body ywonne,
As *quasi modo geniti* · and gentil men vche one,
No beggere ne boye amonges vs · but if it synne made;
Qui facit peccatum, seruus est peccati, &c.
In the olde lawe · as holy lettre telleth,
Mennes sones · men called vs vchone,
Of Adames issue and Eue · ay til god-man deyde;
And after his resurreccioun · *Redemptor* was his name,
And we his bretheren, thourgh hym ybou3t · bothe riche and pore.
For-thi loue we as leue bretheren shal · and vche man laughe vp other,
And of that eche man may forbere · amende there it nedeth,
And euery man helpe other · for hennes shal we alle;
Alter alterius onera portate.
And be we nou3te vnkynde of owre catel · ne of owre kunnynge neyther,
For noot no man how neighe it is · to be ynome fro bothe.
For-thi lakke no lyf other · though he more Latyne knowe,

B. 183. Wherþer L. 207. noot O; not C; noet LR.

And nameliche poure peuple · here preiours may ous helpen;

For god, as the godspel seith · goth ay as in the poure,

And, as the euangelist wytnesseth · whan we maken festes,
We sholde nat clypie knyghtes ther-to · ne no kyne ryche;
"*Cum facitis conuiuium, nolite uocare amicos diuites, &c.;*
Ac calleth the carful ther-to · the crokede and the poure.
For eche frend fedeth other · and fondeth how he may quite
Meles and manshupes · eche a ryche man other;
Ac, for the poure may nat paye · ich wol paye my-self;
That louyeth and leneth hem · largeliche shal ich quite."

At Caluarie, of Cristes blood · Cristendome gan sprynge,
And blod-brethrene by-cam we ther · of on body wonne,
As *quasi modo geniti* · gentel men echone;
No begger ne boye among ous · bote yf synne hit makè;
Qui facit peccatum, seruus est peccati.
In the olde lawe, as the lettre telleth · menne sones me cald ous,
Of Adames ysshue and Eue · ay til god-man deide,
And after hus resureccion · *Redemptor* was hus name,
And we hus blody brethren · as wel beggers as lordes.
For-thy loue we as leue children · and lene hem that nedeth,

And euery man help other · for hennes shulleth we alle
To haue as we han deserued · as holychurche wittnesseth,
Et qui bona egerunt, ibunt in uitam eternam; qui vero mala, in ignem eternum.

C. 102. *diuites* in E only. 111. PE *add* is *after* ous. 112. PEMK *om.* 2*nd* the, *which* ITS *retain.* 113. Of MFSKT; And PE. 116. PE *om.* we. nudeth (*for* nedeth) P. 118. *qui—eternum* in S only.

Ne vnder-nym nou3te foule · for is none with-oute faute.
For what euere clerkis carpe · of Crystenedome or elles,
Cryst to a comune woman seyde · in comune at a feste,
That *fides sua* shulde sauen hir · and saluen hir of alle synnes.
Thanne is byleue a lele helpe · aboue logyke or lawe;
Of logyke ne of lawe · in *Legenda Sanctorum*
Is litel allowaunce made · but if bileue hem helpe.
For it is ouerlonge ar logyke · any lessoun assoille,
And lawe is loth to louye · but if he lacche syluer.
Bothe logyke and lawe · that loueth nou3te to lye,
I conseille alle Crystene · cleue nou3te ther-on to sore.
For sum wordes I fynde ywryten · were of faithes techynge,
That saued synful men · as seynt Iohan bereth wytnesse;
Eadem mensura qua mensi fueritis, remecietur vobis.
For-thi lerne we the lawe of loue · as owre lorde tau3te,
And as seynte Gregory seide · for mannes soule helthe,
Melius est scrutari scelera nostra, quam naturas rerum.
Why I moue this matere · is moste for the pore,
For in her lyknesse owre lorde · ofte hath ben y-knowe.
Witnesse in the Paske-wyke · whan he 3ede to Emaus;
Cleophas ne knewe hym nau3te · that he Cryste were,
For his pore paraille · and pylgrymes wedes,
Tyl he blessed and brak · the bred that thei eten.
So bi his werkes thei wisten · that he was Iesus;
Ac by clothyng thei knewe hym nou3te · ne bi carpynge of tonge.
And al was in ensample · to vs synful here,
That we shulde be low · and loueliche of speche,
And apparaille vs nou3te ouer proudly · for pylgrymes ar we alle;
And in the apparaille of a pore man · and pilgrymes lyknesse
Many tyme god hath ben mette · amonge nedy peple,
There neuere segge hym seigh · in secte of the riche.
Seynt Iohan and other seyntes · were seyne in pore clothynge,
And as pore pilgrymes · preyed mennes godis.
Iesu Cryste on a Iewes dou3ter aly3te · gentil woman though she were,
Was a pure pore mayde · and to a pore man wedded.
Martha on Marye Magdeleyne · an huge pleynte she made,
And to owre saueour self · seyde thise wordes,
Domine, non est tibi cure quod soror mea reliquit me solam ministrare, &c.?

For-thi lerne we lawe of loue · as oure lord tauhte;
The poure peuple faile we nat · whil eny peny ous lasteth.

For in here liknesse oure lorde · lome hath be knowe;
Witnesse in the Paske-woke · when he ȝeode to Emaus;
Cleophas ne knew hym nat · that he Crist were,
For hus poure aparail · and pilgrimes clothes,
Til that he blessede here bred · and brak hit by-twyne hem.
So by hus werkes thei wiste · that he was Iesus;
Ac by hus clothing thei knewe hym nat · so caitifliche he ȝede.
Al was ensample sothliche · to ous synful here,
We sholde be lowe and loueliche · and leel, eche man to other,
And pacient as pilgrimes · for pilgrimes arn we alle.
In the parail of a pilgrim · and in a poure liknesse
Holy seyntes hym seih · ac neuere in secte of riche.
And seynte Marie hus moder · as Matheu bereth witnesse,
Was a pure poure mayde · and to a poure man ywedded.
Martha on Marie Magdalene · an huge pleynte hue made,
And to oure saueour selue · saide these wordes:
Domine, non est tibi cure quod soror mea reliquit me solam ministrare?

B. 243. *sola* L. **C.** 120. PE *om.* we. 131. licknesse P. 133. as MFTSK; PE *om.* 135. PE *om.* hue. 136. *From* IKSTGM; PE *om.* *this line.*

And hastiliche god answered · and eytheres wille folwed,
Bothe Marthaes and Maries · as Mathew bereth witnesse,
Ac pouerte god put bifore · and preysed it the bettre;
Maria optimam partem elegit, que non auferetur ab ea.
And alle the wyse that euere were · by auȝte I can aspye,
Preysen pouerte for best lyf · if pacience it folwe,
And bothe bettere and blisseder · by many folde than ricchesse.
Al though it be soure to suffre · there cometh swete after;
As on a walnot with-oute · is a bitter barke,
And after that bitter barke · (be the shelle aweye),
Is a kirnelle of conforte · kynde to restore;
So is, after, pouerte or penaunce · pacientlyche ytake.
For it maketh a man to haue mynde in gode · and a grete wille
To wepe and to wel bydde · wher-of wexeth mercy,
Of which Cryst is a kirnelle · to conforte the soule.
And wel sykerer he slepyth · the segge that is pore,
And lasse he dredeth deth · and in derke to be robbed,
Than he that is riȝte ryche · resoun bereth wytnesse;
Pauper ego ludo, dum tu diues meditaris.
Al though Salamon seide · as folke seeth in the bible,
Diuicias nec paupertates, &c.,
Wyser than Salamon was · bereth witnesse and tauȝte,
That parfyte pouert was · no possessioun to haue,
And lyf moste lykynge to god · as Luke bereth witnesse,
Si vis perfectus esse, vade & vende, &c.;
And is to mene to men · that on this molde lyuen,
Who so wil be pure parfyt · mote possessioun forsake,
Or selle it, as seith the boke · and the syluer dele
To beggeres that gone and begge · and bidden good for goddes loue.
For failled neuere man mete · that myȝtful god serued;
Non vidi iustum derelictum, nec semen eius querens panem;
As Dauid seith in the sauter · to suche that ben in wille
To serue god godeliche · ne greueth hym no penaunce,
Nichil inpossibile volenti,
Ne lakketh neuere lyflode · lynnen ne wollen,
Inquirentes autem dominum non minuentur omni bono.

B. 246. *auferetur—ea* COB; L *om.* cf. l. 237. 258. segge R; man LWCOB; 270. *Non—panem* in O only.

And here aitheres wil · hasteliche god a-soilede,
And aitheres werkes and wil · ryght wel he alowede;
Ac god putte pouerte by-fore · and preouede hit for the bettere;
Maria optimam partem elegit, que non auferetur ab ea.
And alle the wise that euere were · by ouht ich can aspie,
Preisede pouerte for beste · yf pacience hit folwe,
And bothe bettere and blessedere · by meny folde than richesse;
Thauh hit be sour to suffre · ther cometh a swete after.
As in a walnote, with-oute · ys a byter barke,
And after that biter barke · (be the shale aweye),
Ys a curnel of comfort · kynde to restorie;
So, after, pouerte and penaunce · pacientliche ytake,
Maketh man haue mynde in god · and hus mercy craue,

The whiche is curnel of comfort · for alle Cristene saules.
And wel sykerour he slepeth · the seg that is poure,
And lasse drat by daye · other in derk to be robbed,
Than he that ys ryht ryche · reson bereth wittnesse;
Pauper ego ludo · dum tu diues meditaris.

Holichurche wittnesseth · "ho so for-saketh
Hus fader other hus frendes · fremde othere sibbe,
Other eny welthe in this worlde · hus wyf other hus children,
For the loue of oure lorde · loweth hym to be poure,
He shal haue an hundredfolde · of heuene-ryche blisse,
And lif lastyng for euere · by-fore oure lorde in heuene;
Quicunque reliquerit patrem & matrem," &c.
Crist a-cordeth eft her-with · clerkes witen the sothe,
What god hym-self saide · to a seg that he louede;
"Yf the lyketh," quath god, "to lyue · the lif that is parfit,
Al that thow hast here · hasteliche go sulle hit;

C. 137. aithere (*for* aitheres) P; *see next line.* 147. ytake EIKST; take P. 151. deerk P. 155. fremde MT; *miswritten* frende PEIFK. 159. *reliquerit* MFES; *relinquet* P. 160. whiten P.

If prestes weren parfyt · thei wolde no syluer take
For masses ne for matynes · nouȝte her mete of vsureres,
Ne neither kirtel ne cote · theigh they for colde shulde deye,
And thei her deuoir dede · as Dauid seith in the sauter,
Iudica me, deus, et discerne causam meam.

[*Continued on* p. 356.]

B. 277. deuoir WCOB; deuor L.

3eue poure peuple the pans · ther-of porse thow none,
Ac 3eue hem forth to poure folke · that for my loue hit asketh.
For-sake al and suwe me · and so is thi beste;
Si uis perfectus esse, uade & uende omnia que habes."
Thus consaileth Crist · in comun ous alle:—
"Ho so coueyteth to come · to my kynriche,
He mot for-sake hym-self · hus suster and hus brother,
And al that the worlde wolde · and my wil folwen,
Nisi renunciaueritis omnibus que possidetis," *&c.*
Meny prouerbis ich myghte haue · of meny holy seyntes,
To testifie for treuthe · the tale that ich shewe,
And poetes to preouen hit · Porfirie and Plato;
Aristotile, Ouidius · and elleuene hundred,
Tullius, Tholomeus · ich can nat telle here names,
Preouen pacient pouerte · pryns of alle vertues.
And by the greyn that groweth · god ous alle techeth
Mischeifs on this molde · mekeliche to suffre:
Nisi granum frumenti cadens in terra mortuum fuerit, ipsum solum manet;
Bote yf the sed that sowen is · in the sloh sterue,
Shal neuere spir springen vp · ne spik on strawe curne;
Sholde neuere whete wexe · bote whete fyrste deyde.
And other sedes al-so · in the same wyse,
That ben leide on louh erthe · ylore as hit were;
And thorw the grete grace of god · of greyn ded in erthe
Atte laste launceth vp · wher-by we lyuen alle.
Ac seedes that been sowen · and mowe suffre wyntres,
Aren tydyour and tower · to mannes by-hofthe,
Than seedes that sowen beeth · and mowe nouht with forstes,
With wyndes ne with wederes · as in wynter-tyme;
As, lynne-seed and lik-seed · and lente-seedes alle
Aren nouht so worthy as whete · ne so wel mowen
In the feld with the forst · and hit freese longe.
Ryght so, for sothe · that suffre may penaunces
Worth alowed of oure lorde · at here laste ende;
And for here penaunce be preysed · as for a pure martir,

C. 166. *que habes* in S only. 170. *omnibus* EFS; *omnia* PMIKT. 172. testefie P. 177. PE *om.* the. 178. *From* MIKTG; PE *om. this line.* 179. that (*for 1st* the) P. 185. Atte the P. PE *om.* we. 188. forstes EKG; forste P. 195. PE *om.* a.

Other for a confessour ykud · that counteth nat a ruysshe
Fere, ne famyne · ne false menne tonges;
Bote as an hosebonde hopeth · after an hard wynter,
Yf god gyueth hym the lif · to haue a good heruest,
So preoueth these prophetes · that pacientliche suffreth.
Myschiefs and myshappes · and menye tribulacions
By-tokneth ful treweliche · in tyme comynge after
Murthe for hus mornynge · and that muche plente.
For Crist seide to hus seyntes · that for hus sake tholeden
Pouerte and penaunce · and persecucion of body,
Schullen haue more worschipe to wages · [and worthier ben yholde]
Than angeles—in here angre · on this wise hem grette,
" *Tristitia uestra uertetur in gaudium:*
ȝoure sorwe in-to solas · shal turne atte laste,
And out of wo in-to wele · ȝoure wyrdes shul chaunge."
Ac who so redeth of the riche · the reuers he may fynde,
How god, as the godspel telleth · gyueth hem foul towname,
And that hus gost shal go · and hus good by-leue,
And asketh hym after · "ho shal hit haue,
The catel that he kepeth so · in coffres and in bernes?
And art so loth to leue · that leue shalt needes:
O stulte, ista nocte anima tua egredietur; que congregasti, cuius erunt? Thesaurizat, & ignorat cui, &c.
An vnredy reue · thi residue shal spene,
That menye moththe was maister ynne · in a mynte-while;
Vp-holderes on the hul · shullen haue hit to selle."
Lo, lo, lordes, lo · and ladies, taketh hede,
Hit lasteth nat longe · that is lycour swete,
As pees-coddes and pere-Ionettes · plomes and chiries!
That lyghtliche launceth vp · litel while dureth,
And that that rathest rypeth · roteth most saunest.
On fat londe and ful of donge · foulest wedes groweth;
Right so for sothe · suche that ben bysshopes,
Erles and archedekenes · and other ryche clerkes,

C. 200. these MKFS; thees P. 205. and MIFTSG; KPE *om.* (*twice*). penaunce MIFTSG; penaunces PE. 206. Schullen—wages I (*the line being imperfect; other copies omit the line*). [and—yholde] *supplied from conjecture.* 207. Than I; Thanne T; PEKMS *om.* 210. P *om.* who. PE *om.* 1*st* the. 215. ert (*for* art) PEK. *que—erunt* in E only. *cui* in S only. 217. PE *om.* maister.

That chaffaren as chapmen · and chiden bote thei wynne,
And hauen the worlde at here wil · other-wyse to lyue.
Right as weodes wexen · in wose and in donge,
So of rychesse vpon richesse · arisen al vices.
Lo, lond ouere-layde · with marle and with donge,
Whete that wexeth ther-on · worth lygge ar hit ripe;
Right so, for sothe · for to sygge treuthe,
Ouer-plente pryde norssheth · ther pouerte destrueth hit.
For, how hit euere be ywonne · bote hit be wel dispended,
Worldliche wele is wicked thynge · to hym that hit kepeth.
For yf he be fer ther-fro · ful ofte hath he drede
That fals folke fecche away · felonliche hus godes;
And ȝut more hit maketh men · meny tyme and ofte
To synegen, and to souchen · soteltees of gyle,
For couetyze of that catel · to culle hem that hit kepeth;
And so is meny man ymorthred · for hus money and goodes,
And tho that duden the dede · ydampned ther-fore after,
And he for hus harde holdynge · in helle, par aunter.
So couetise of catel · was combraunce to hem alle;
Lo, how pans purchasede · faire places and drede,
That rote is of robbers · the richesse with-ynne!
For he that gadereth so his good · god no-thyng preiseth.

Hic explicit passus iijus de dowel.

C. 230. arisen M; ariseth G; arist PEIKT (*badly*). 232. repe (*for* ripe) P. 236. Worliche P. 242. men (*for* man) P. 247. PE *om.* of. 248. *In* M *only*.

PASSUS XIV.

Incipit passus quartus de Dowel.

AC wel worth Pouerte! · for he may walke vnrobbed
Among pilours in pees · yf pacience hym folwe.
Oure prynce Iesu pouerte chees · and hus aposteles alle,
And ay the lenger thei lyueden · the lasse good thei hadde;
Tanquam nichil habentes, & omnia possidentes.
3ut men rat that Abraam and Iob · were wonder ryche,
And out of numbre tho men · menye meobles hadden.
Abraam for al hus god · hadde muche teene,
In gret pouerte he was yput; · a pryns, as hit were,
By-nom hym ys housewif · and heeld here hym-self,
And Abraam nat hardy · ones to letten hym,
Ne for brightnesse of here beaute · here spouse to be by-knowe.
And for he suffrede and seide nouht · our lord sente tokne,
That the kynge cride · to Abraam mercy,
And deliuerede hym hus wif · with muche welthe after.
And also Iob the gentel · what Ioye hadde he on erthe,
How bittere he hit bouhte · as the book telleth!
And for he songe in hus sorwe · "*si bona accepimus a domino*,
Dere-worthe dere god! do we so *mala*,"
Al hus sorwe to solas · thorgh that songe turnede,
And Iob by-cam a Iolif man · and al hus Ioye newe.
Lo, how pacience in here pouerte · these patriarkes releuede,
And brouhte hem al aboue · that in bale rotede.
As greyn that lyth in the greot · and thorgh grace, atte laste,
Spryngeth vp and spredeth · so spedde the fader Abraam,
And al-so the gentel Iob; · here Ioie hath non ende.
Ac leueth nouht, 3e lewede men · that ich lacke richesse,
Thauh ich preise pouerte thus · and preoue hit by ensamples
Worthiour, as by holy writ · and wise philosopheres.
Bothe two beth goode · be 3e ful certayn,
And lyues that our lorde loueth · and large weyes to heuene.

C. 1. vnrobbede P. 5. rat that MKT; ret that I; reedith that FG; that of (*wrongly*) PE. 8. PE *om.* he. 17. *accepimus* MKFETG; *accipiam* P. 29. beth ES; ben MIT; *miswritten* but P.

Ac the poure pacient · purgatorye passeth
Rathere than the ryche · thauh thei renne at ones.
For yf a marchaunt and a messager · metten to-gederes,
And scholde wenden o way · where both mosten reste,
And rekene byfore reson · a resonable acounte,
What one hath, what another hath · and what hy hadde bothe,
The marchante mote nede be lette · lengere then the messagere;
For the parcels of hus paper · and other pryuey dettes
Wol lette hym, as ich leyue · the lengthe of a myle.
The messager doth na more · bote with hus mouth telleth
Hus erande, and hus lettere sheweth · and is a-non delyuered.
And thauh thei wende by the wey · tho two to-gederes,
Thauh the messager make hus wey · a-mydde the whete,
Wole no wys man wroth be · ne hus wed take;
Ys non haiwarde yhote · hus wed for to take;
Necessitas non habet legem.
Ac yf the marchaunt make hus way · ouere menne corne,
And the haywarde happe · with hym for to mete,
Other hus hatt other hus hode · othere elles hus gloues
The marchaunt mot for-go · other moneye of hus porse,
And ȝut be lett, as ich leyue · for the lawe asketh
Marchauns for here merchaundise · in meny place to tollen.
ȝut thauh thei wenden on way · as to Wynchestre fayre,
The marchaunt with hus marchaundise · may nat go so swithe
As the messager may · ne with so mochel ese.
For that on bereth bote a boxe · a breuet ther-ynne,
Ther the marchaunt ledeth a male · with meny kynne thynges,
And dredeth to be ded there-fore · and he in derke mete
With robbours and reuers · that riche men dispoilen;
Ther the messager is ay murye · hus mouthe ful of songes,
And leyueth for hus letteres · that no wight wol hym greue.
Ac ȝut, myghte the merchaunt · thorgh monye and other ȝiftes,
Haue hors and hardy men; · thauh he mette theoues,
Wolde non suche a-sailen hym · for hem that hym folweth,
As safliche passe as the messager · and as sone at hus hostil.

C. 35. acounte MIKF; acountes P. 40. P *om.* with. 41. erende IK; lettere PE. lettre KT; erande E; ernde P. 43. amyde P. 48. hode EK; hood ITFS; hed (!) P. 51. tollen TESG; tullen P. 58. P *inserts* with *before* reuers. 60. *For* wight *perhaps read* lede, *as in* T. 61. ȝeftes P.

3e wyten wel, 3e wyse men · what this is to mene,
The marchaunt is no more to mene · bote men that ben ryche
Aren a-countable to Crist · and to the kyng of heuene,
That holden mote the heye weye · euene the ten hestes,
Bothe louye and lene · the leelle and the vnleelle,
And haue reuthe, and releue · with hus grete richesse,
By hus power, alle manere men · in meschief yfalle;
Fynde beggars bred · backes for the colde,
Tythen here goodes treweliche · a tol, as hit semeth,
That oure lord loketh after · of eche a lyf that wynneth
With-oute wyles other wrong · other wommen atte stuwes;
And 3ut more, to make pees · and quyte menne dettes,
Bothe spele and spare · to spene vpon the needful,
As Crist himself comaundeth · to alle Cristene peuple,
Alter alterius onera portate, et sic adimplebitis legem Christi.
The messagers aren the mendinans · that lyueth by menne almesse,
Beth nat ybounde as beth the riche · to bothe the two lawes,
To lene ne to lere · ne lentenes to faste,
And othere pryuey penaunces · the whiche the preest wot wel
That the lawe 3eueth leue · suche lowe folke to be excused;
As, none tythes to tythen · ne clothe the nakede,
Ne in enquestes to come · ne *contumax*, thauh he worche
Haly day other holy eue · hus mete to deserue.
For yf he loueth and by-leyueth · as the lawe techeth,
Qui crediderit & baptizatus fuerit, saluus erit, &c.,
Telleth the lord a tale · as a trewe messager,
And sheweth by seel and sitthe by lettere · with what lord he dwelleth,
Knowelecheth hym Cristene · and of holy kirke by-leyue,
Ther is no lawe, as ich leyue · wol lette hym the gate,
Ther god is gatwarde hym-self · and eche a gome knoweth;
The porter of pure reuthe · may parforme the lawe,
In that he wilneth and wolde · ech wight as him-self.
For the wil is as muche worth · of a wrecche beggere,
As al that the ryche may reyme · and ryghtfulliche dele;

C. 68. PES *om. 2nd* the. 73. tryweliche P. 78. P *om.* him *in* himself. *et—christi* in F only. 80. beeth P. 87. *saluus erit* MF; P *om.* 90. Knowelecheth KF; Kneweleche PE. kirke I; churche PEFS.

And as muche mede · for a myte that he offreth
As the riche man for al his moneye · and more, as by the godspel;
Amen dico uobis, quia hec uidua paupercula misit plus omnibus qui miserunt in gasophilacium;
So that poure pacient · is parfitest lif of alle,
And alle parfite preestes · to pouerte sholde drawe;

[*Continued on* p. 357.]

C. 98. is (*for* his) P. *misit—omnibus* E. *qui—gasophilacium* S.

[*Continued from* p. 348.]

Spera-in-deo speketh of prestes · that haue no spendyng-syluer,
That ȝif thei trauaille trewlich · and trusten in god almiȝti,
Hem shulde lakke no lyflode · noyther wollen ne lynnen.
And the title that ȝe take ordres by · telleth ȝe ben auaunced;
Thanne nedeth nouȝte ȝow to take syluer · for masses that ȝe syngen.
For he that toke ȝow ȝowre tytle · shulde take ȝow ȝowre wages,
Or the bisshop that blesseth ȝow · if that ȝe ben worthy.
For made neuere kynge no knyȝte · but he hadde catel to spende,
As bifel for a kniȝte · or fonde hym for his strengthe;
It is a careful knyȝte · and of a caytyue kynges makynge,
That hath no londe ne lynage riche · ne good loos of his handes.
The same I segge for sothe · by alle suche prestes,
That han noyther kunnynge ne kynne · but a croune one,
And a tytle, a tale of nouȝte · to his lyflode at myschiefe,
He hath more bileue, as I leue · to lacche thorw his croune
Cure, than for konnyng · or— 'knowen for clene of berynge.'
I haue wonder for why · and wher-fore the bisshop
Maketh suche prestes · that lewed men bytrayen.
A chartre is chalengeable · byfor a chief iustice;
If false Latyne be in the lettre · the lawe it inpugneth,
Or peynted parenterlinarie · or parceles ouer-skipped;
The gome that gloseth so chartres · for a goky is holden.
So is it a goky, by god · that in his gospel failleth,
Or in masse or in matynes · maketh any defaute,
Qui offendit in vno, in omnibus est reus, etc.
And also in the sauter · seyth Dauyd to ouerskippers,
Psallite deo nostro, psallite; quoniam rex terre deus israel; psallite sapienter.
The bisshop shal be blamed · bifor god, as I leue,
That crouneth suche goddes kniȝtes · that conneth nouȝt *sapienter*
Synge ne psalmes rede · ne segge a messe of the day.
Ac neuer neyther is blamelees · the bisshop ne the chapleyne,
For her eyther is endited · and that of '*ignorancia*
Non excusat episcopos · *nec* idiotes prestes.'

B. 281. ye WR; þei LCOB (*for* 1*st* ȝe). 285. no kynge no L. 294. for W; & L. 298. or W; LRCOB *om.*

[*Continued from* p. 355.]

For *spera-in-deo* speketh of prestes · that han no spendyng-seluer.
That yf thay trauaile treweliche · and tristen in god almyghty,
Hem sholde neuere lackye lyflode · nother lynnen ne wollene.
The title that ȝe taketh ȝoure ordres by · telleth ȝe beth auaunced,
And needeth nat to nyme seluer · for masses that ȝe syngen;
For he that tok ȝow title · sholde take ȝow wages,
Other the bisshop that blessed ȝow · and enbaumede ȝoure fyngeres.
For made neuere kyng knyght · bote he hadde catel to spene,
As by-fel for a knyght · other fond hym for hus strengthe;
For hit is a carful knyght · and of a caitif kynges makynge,
That hath no londe ne lynage riche · ne good loos of hus hondes.
The same ich seye for sothe · by suche that ben preestes,
That han nother konnynge ne kyn · bote a corone one,
And a title, a tale of nouht · to hus liflode, as hit were.

Vuele ben thei suffred · suche that schenden masses
Throgh hure luther lyuynge · and lewede vnder-stondyng!
A charter is chalangable · by-fore a chief Iustice,
Yf fals Latyn be in that lettere · the lawe hit enpugneth,
Other peynted par-entrelignarie · parcels ouer-skipped;
The gome that so gloseth chartres · a goky he is yholden.
So is he a goky, by god · that in the godspel failleth,
In masse other in matynes · maketh eny defaute;
Qui offendit in uno, in omnibus est reus.
And ouer-skippers al-so · in the sauter seith Dauid,
Psallite deo nostro, psallite, quia rex terre deus; psallite sapienter.
The bishop shal be blamed · by-fore god, as ich leyue,
That coroneth suche clerkes · as for godes knyghtes,
That conneth nat *sapienter* · nother synge ne rede.
Ac neyther is al blameles · the bisshop ne the chapeleyn;
For *ignorantia non excusat* · as ich haue herd in bookes.'—

C. 104, 106. titile P. 104. auaunced MT; auaunsed IKEG; amanced P. 114. titile P. 115. schenden EMS; shynden P. 118. that lettere MIKSEG; the letteres P. 123. *psallite sapienter* M.

This lokynge on lewed prestes · hath don me lepe fram pouerte,
The whiche I preyse there pacyence is · more parfyt than ricchesse.'
Ac moche more in metynge thus · with me gan one dispute,
And slepynge I seigh al this · and sithen cam Kynde,
And nempned me by my name · and bad me nymen hede,
And thorw the wondres of this worlde · wytte for to take.
And on a mountaigne that Mydelerd hy3te · as me tho thou3te,
I was fette forth · by ensaumples to knowe,
Thorugh eche a creature and Kynde · my creatoure to louye.
I seigh the sonne and the see · and the sonde after,
And where that bryddes and bestes · by here makes thei 3eden,
Wylde wormes in wodes · and wonderful foules,
With flekked fetheres · and of fele coloures.
Man and his make · I my3te bothe byholde;
Pouerte and plente · bothe pees and werre,
Blisse and bale · bothe I seigh at ones,
And how men token mede · and mercy refused.
Resoune I seighe sothly · suen alle bestes
In etynge, in drynkynge · and in engendrynge of kynde;
And after course of concepcioun · none toke kepe of other,
As whan thei hadde ryde in rotey-tyme; · anon ri3te ther-after,
Males drowen hem to males · a mornynges bi hem-self,
And in euenynges also · 3ede males fro femeles.
There ne was cow ne cowkynde · that conceyued hadde,
That wolde belwe after boles · ne bore after sowe;
Bothe horse and houndes · and alle other bestes
Medled nou3te wyth here makes · that with fole were.
Briddes I bihelde · that in buskes made nestes;
Hadde neuere wye witte · to worche the leest.
I hadde wonder at whom · and where the pye lerned
To legge the stykkes · in whiche she leyeth and bredeth;
There nys wri3te as I wene · shulde worche hir neste to paye;
If any masoun made a molde ther-to · moche wonder it were.

B. 319. makes W; make LCRO; *see* l. 335. 331. 3ede R; 3e L. 339. leyeþ W; leythe L.

Thus Rechelessnesse in a rage · a-resonede clergie,
And scornede Scripture · that meny skyles shewede,
Til that Kynde cam · Clergie to helpen,
And in the myrour of Myddel-erde · made hym eft to loke,
To knowe by ech creature · Kynde to louye.
And ich bowede my body · by-holdynge al a-boute,
And seih the sonne and the see · and the sand after,
Wher that briddes and bestes · by here makes ȝeden,
Wilde wormes in wodes · and wonderful foules
With fleckede fetheres · and of fele colours;
Man and hus make · ich myghte see bothe,
Pouerte and plente · bothe pees and werre,
Blisse and biter bale · bothe ich seih at ones;
And how that men mede token · and mercy refuseden.
Reson ich seih sothliche · suwen alle bestes
In etynge, in drynkyng · in gendrynge of kynde;
After cours of concepcion · non tok kepe of other
As when thei hadde ruteyed; · a-non thei resten after.
Maules drowen hem to maules · on morwenynge by hem-self,
And femeles to femeles · herdeyed and drow.
Ther ne was kow ne kow-kynde · that conceyued hadde,
That wolde bere after bole · ne bor after sowe.
Ther was no kynne kynde · that conceyued hadde,
That ne lees the lykynge of lust · of flesch, as hit were,
Saue man and hus make; · and ther-of me wondrede.
For out of reson thei ryde · and rechelesliche taken on,
As in durne dedes · bothe drynkynge and elles.
Briddes ich by-helde · in bosshes maden nestes,
Hadde neuere weye wit · to worche the leste.
Ich hadde wonder at wham · and wher that the pye
Lernede legge styckes · that leyen in here neste;
Ther is no wryght, as ich wene · sholde worche here nest to paye.
Yf eny mason therto · makede a molde
With alle here wyse castes · wonder me thynketh!

C. 132. mydel P. 136. ȝeeden P. 138. fetthers P. 143. sauh (*for* seih) P; *see* ll. 135, 141. sotthliche P. 144. in (*before* drynkyng) KES; and PTM. 150. wolde bere T; wuld bere S; beere P. 151. kynne MES; kynde P. 152. lust MIKST; loust P. 156. by-heelde P. neestes P. 158. wher · and at wham P (*only*); *the rest as in text.* 159. neste EIKSG; neestes P; *see next line.*

And ȝet me merueilled more · how many other briddes
Hudden and hileden · her egges ful derne
In mareys and mores · for men sholde hem nouȝt fynde,
And hudden here egges · whan thei there-fro wente,
For fere of other foules · and for wylde bestis.
And some troden her makes · and on trees bredden,
And brouȝten forth her bryddes so · al aboue the grounde;
And some bryddes at the bille · thorwgh brethynge conceyued;
And some kauked, I toke kepe · how pekokes bredden.
Moche merueilled me · what maister thei hadde,
And who tauȝte hem on trees · to tymbre so heighe,
There noither buirn ne beste · may her briddes rechen.
And sythen I loked vpon the see · and so forth vpon the sterres,
Many selcouthes I seygh · ben nought to seye nouthe.
I seigh floures in the fritthe · and her faire coloures,
And how amonge the grene grasse · grewe so many hewes,
And somme soure and some swete · selcouthe me thouȝte;
Of her kynde and her coloure · to carpe it were to longe.
Ac that moste moeued me · and my mode chaunged,
That Reson rewarded · and reuled alle bestes,
Saue man and his make; · many tyme and ofte
No resoun hem folwed · and thanne I rebuked
Resoun, and riȝte · til hym-seluen I seyde,
'I haue wonder of the,' quod I · 'that witty art holden,
Why thow ne suwest man and his make · that no mysfait hem folwe?'

And Resoun arated me · and seyde, 'recche the neuere,

And ȝut ich meruaillede more · menye of tho bryddes
Hudden and heleden · durneliche here egges,
For no foul sholde hem fynde · bote hus fere and hym-self.
And some treden, ich tok kepe · and on trees bredden,
And brouhten forth here bryddes · al aboue the grounde.
In mareis and in mores · in myres and in wateres
Dompynges dyueden; · 'deere god,' ich sayde,
'Wher hadden these wilde suche witt · and at what scole?'
And whan the pocok caukede · ther-of ich took kepe,
How vn-corteisliche the cok · hus kynde forth strenede,
And ferliche hadde of hus fairnesse · and of hus foule ledene.
And siththe ich loked on the see · and so forth on the sterres,
Meny selcouth ich seih · aren nouht to seggen nouthe;
Ne what on floures in feldes · and of hure faire coloures,
How out of greot and of gras · grewe so meny huwes,
Somme soure and somme swete · selcouth me thouhte;
Of here kynde and of here colours · to carpen hit were to longe.
Ac that that moste meuede me · and my mod chaungede,
Was that ich seih Reson · suwen alle bestes
Saue man and mankynde; · meny tymes me thouhte,
Reson rewelede hem nat · nother riche ne poure.
Then ich aresonede Reson · and right til hym ich seide,
'Ich haue wonder in my witt · so wis as thow art holde,
Wher-for and why · so wide as thow regnest,
That thow ne ruelest rather · renkes than other beestes?
For ich see noone so ofte sorfeten · sothliche so mankynde;
In mete out of mesure · and meny tymes in drynke,
In wommen, in wedes · and in wordes bothe
Thei ouerdon hit day and nyght · and so doth noon othere.
Bestes ruwelen hem al by reson · and renkes ful fewe.
And ther-fore meruaileth me · for man, as in makynge,
Is most yliche the · in wit and in werkes,
Whi he ne loueth thy lore · and lyueth as thow techest?'
And Reson aresonede me · and seide, 'recche the neuere

C. 169. dyuyden P; dyuede IT; diuyde K. 170. these MKS; thees P. 172. hud (*for* hus) P. strenede MIK; strende P. 173. ledene MKG; leedene P. 175. ic (*for* ich) P; *see* l. 174. 176. P *om.* of. 178. selcouhth P. 180. moste I; most SKT; moost G; P *om.* 185. herte (*for* art) P. 193. makynge KS; makyng ME; mankynde PG. 194. His (*for* Is) P. witt P.

Whi I suffre or nouȝt suffre · thi-self hast nouȝt to done;
Amende thow it, if thow myȝte · for my tyme is to abyde.
Suffraunce is a souereygne vertue · and a swyfte veniaunce.
Who suffreth more than god?' quod he · 'no gome, as I leue!
He miȝte amende in a minute-while · al that mys standeth,
Ac he suffreth for somme mannes good · and so is owre bettre.
Holy writ,' quod that weye · 'wisseth men to suffre;
Propter deum subiecti estote omni creature.
Frenche men and fre men · affeyteth thus her childerne,
Bele vertue est soffrance · mal dire est petyt veniance,
Bien dire et bien soffrir · fait lui soffrant a bien venir.
For-thi I rede,' quod Reson · 'rewle thi tonge bettere,
And ar thow lakke eny lyf · loke if thow be to preyse!
For is no creature vnder Criste · can formen hym-seluen;
And if a man miȝte make · hym-self goed to the poeple,
Vch a lif wold be lakles · leue thow non other!
Ne thow schalt fynde but fewe · fayne for to here
Of here defautes foule · by-for hem rehersed.
The wyse and the witty · wrote thus in the bible,
De re que te non molestat, noli certare.
For be a man faire or foule · it falleth nouȝte for to lakke
The shappe ne the shafte · that god shope hym-selue;
For al that he did was wel ydo · as holywrit witnesseth,
Et vidit deus cuncta que fecerat, et erant valde bona;
And badde euery creature · in his kynde encrees,
Al to murthe with man · that most woo tholye
In fondynge of the flesshe · and of the fende bothe.
For man was made of suche a matere · he may nouȝt wel astert
That ne some tymes hym bitit · to folwen his kynde;
Catoun acordeth there-with · *nemo sine crimine viuit.*'
Tho cauȝte I coloure anon · and comsed to ben aschamed,
And awaked ther-with; · wo was me thanne
That I in meteles ne myȝte · more haue yknowen.
And thanne seyde I to my-self · and chidde that tyme;
'Now I wote what Dowel is,' quod I · 'by dere god, as me thinketh!'
And as I caste vp myn eyghen · one loked on me, and axed

B. 374—384. *These* 11 *lines are in* R *only.* 376. *pety* (for *petyt*) R. 379. my (*for* eny) R. 385. *noly* L.

Whi ich suffre other nat suffre:'—· 'certes,' ich seide,
'Ech a seg for hym-self · Salamon ous techeth;
De re que te non molestat, noli certare.'
'Ho suffreth more than god?' quath he · 'no gome, as ich leyue!
He myght a-mende in a mynt-while · al that amys stondes;
Ac he suffreth, in ensaumple · that we sholde alle suffren.
Ys no vertue so feyr · of value ne of profit,
As ys suffrance souereynliche · so hit be for godes loue.
And so witnesseth the wyse · and wysseth the Frenshe,
Bele uertue est suffraunce · mal dire est petite ueniaunce;
Bien dire e bien suffrir · fait ly suffrable a bien uenir.
For-thi,' quath Reson, 'ich rede the · rewele thi tonge euere;
And er thow lakke eny lyf · loke ho is to preise.
For is no creature vnder Cryst · that can hym-selue make;
And yf Cristene creatures · couthen make hem-selue,
Eche lede wolde be lacles · leyf thow non othere!

Man was mad of suche matere · he may nat wel a-sterte
That som tymes hym tit · to folwen hus kynde;
Caton a-cordeth her-with · *nemo sine crimine uiuit.*'
Tho cauhte ich colour a-non · and comsed to be ashamed,
And awaked ther-with; · wo was me thenne,
That ich ne hadde ymet more · so murye as ich slepte,
And sayde a-non to my-self · 'slepynge, ich hadde grace
To wite what Dowel ys · ac wakynge neuere!'

And thenne was ther a wiȝt · what he was ich nuste:—

C. 204. wittnesseth P. 206. *suffrer* PTMEG; *suffrier* I; read *suffrir*. *uenir* IT; *uener* PEG. 220. whiȝt P.

Of me, what thinge it were? · 'ywisse, sire,' I seide,
'To se moche and suffre more · certes,' quod I, 'is Dowel!'
'Haddestow suffred,' he seyde · 'slepyng tho thow were,
Thow sholdest haue knowen that Clergye can · and conceiued more thorugh Resoun;
For Resoun wolde haue reherced the · riȝte as Clergye saide,
Ac for thine entermetyng · here artow forsake;
Philosophus esses, si tacuisses.
Adam, while he spak nouȝt · had paradys at wille,
Ac whan he mameled aboute mete · and entermeted to knowe
The wisdom and the witte of god · he was put fram blisse;
And riȝt so ferde Resoun bi the; · thow with rude speche
Lakkedest, and losedest thinge · that longed nouȝt to be done;
Tho hadde he no lykynge · forto lere the more.
Pruide now and presumpcioun · per-auenture, wole the appele,
That Clergye thi compaignye · ne kepeth nouȝt to sue.
Shal neuere chalangynge ne chydynge · chaste a man so sone
As shal Shame, and shenden hym · and shape hym to amende.
For lat a dronken daffe · in a dyke falle,
Late hym ligge, loke nouȝte on hym · til hym lest to ryse;
For though Resoun rebuked hym thanne · reccheth he neuere,
Of clergie ne of his conseil · he counteth nouȝt a rusche;
To blame or for to bete hym thanne · it were but pure synne.
Ac whan Nede nymeth hym vp · for doute lest he sterue,
And Shame shrapeth his clothes · and his shynes wassheth,
Thanne wote the dronken daffe · wherfore he is to blame.'
'Ȝe seggen soth,' quod I · 'ich haue yseyne it ofte,
There smit no thinge so smerte · ne smelleth so soure,
As Shame, there he sheweth him · for euery man hym shonyeth!
Why ȝe wisse me thus,' quod I · 'was for I rebuked Resoun.'
'Certes,' quod he, 'that is soth' · and shope hym for to walken;
And I aros vp riȝt with that · and folwed hym after,
And preyed hym of his curteisye · to telle me his name.

B. 407. whhiles L. 419—421. reccheth—hym thanne *in* R *only*. R *has* reccheth hym (*for* reccheth he), *and omits* To blame. 426. smitte L.

'What ys Dowel?' quath that wi3t · 'y-wys, syre,' ich seyde,
'To see muche and suffren al · certes, syre, ys Dowel.'
'Haddest thow suffred,' he seide · 'slepyng tho thow were,
Thow sholdest haue knowe that Cleregye can · and more conceyued thorwe Reson.
For Reson wolde haue reherced to the · ryght as Cleregie seide;
Ac for thyn entermetyng · her art thow for-sake:
Philosophus fuisses, si tacuisses; et alibi: Locutum me aliquando penituit, tacuisse nunquam.
Adam, whiles he spak nat · hadde paradys at wylle;
Ac whanne he mamelede a-boute mete · and musede for to knowe
The wisdome and the wit of god · he was putte out of blisse.
Ryght so ferde Reson by the · for thi rude speche,
And for thow woldest wyte why · of Resones pryuete.
For pruyde and presompcion · of thy parfit lyuynge
Reson refusede the · and wolde nat reste with the,
Ne Cleregie of hus connynge · kepeth the nat shewe.
For shal neuere, er shame come · a shrewe wel be chasted.
For let a dronken daffe · in a diche falle,
Let hym lygge, lok nat on hym · til hym luste aryse;
And thauh Reson rebuke hym thenne · reccheth he neuere,
Of clergie ne of kynde witt · counteth he nat a russhe:
To blame hym other to bete hym thenne · ich halde hit bote synne.
Ac when Neede nymeth hym vp · a-non he ys a-shamed,
And thenne wot he wher-fore · and whi he is to blame.'
'3e seggeth soth, by my soule,' quath ich · 'ich haue seyen hit ofte,
Ther smyt no thynge so smerte · ne smelleth so foule
As Shame; ther he sheweth hym · ech man shoneth hus companye.
Whi 3e worden to me thus · was for ich aresonede Reson.'
'3e, certes,' quath he, 'that is soth' · and shop hym to walke;
And ich a-roos vp ryght with that · and reuerencede hym fayre,
And yf hus wil were · he wolde hus name telle?

Hic explicit passus quartus de Dowel.

C. 223. suffrede P. 226. ert (*for* art) PE. 227. att P. 229. witt P. 237. Let MKST; Leet P. on IKMST; in PE. 238. rebuke IKMST; rebuky P. 241. a-shamede P. 244. Ther IMKST; Her PE. 248. ryght vp P.

PASSUS XII.

Passus duodecimus.

'I AM Ymagynatyf,' quod he · 'idel was I neuere,
Thouȝe I sitte bi my-self · in sikenesse ne in helthe.
I haue folwed the in feithe · this fyue and fourty wyntre,
And many tymes haue moeued the · to thinke on thine ende,
And how fele fernȝeres are faren · and so fewe to come,
And of thi wylde wantounesse · tho thow ȝonge were,
To amende it in thi myddel age · lest miȝte the faylled
In thyne olde elde · that yuel can suffre
Pouerte or penaunce · or preyeres bidde;
Si non in prima vigilia, nec in secunda, etc.
Amende the while thow myȝte · thow hast ben warned ofte
With poustees of pestilences · with pouerte and with angres;
And with thise bitter baleyses · god beteth his dere childeren,
Quem diligo, castigo.
And Dauid in the sauter seith · of suche that loueth Iesus,
"*Virga tua et baculus tuus, ipsa me consolata sunt, &c.*
Al-though thow stryke me with thi staffe · with stikke or with ȝerde,
It is but murth as for me · to amende my soule."
And thow medlest the with makynges · and myȝtest go sey thi sauter,
And bidde for hem that ȝiueth the bred; · for there ar bokes ynowe
To telle men what Dowel is · Dobet, and Dobet bothe,
And prechoures to preue what it is · of many a peyre freres.'
I seigh wel he sayde me soth · and, somwhat me to excuse,
Seide, 'Catoun conforted his sone · that, clerke though he were,
To solacen hym sum tyme · as I do whan I make;
Interpone tuis interdum gaudia curis, etc.
And of holy men I herde,' quod I · 'how thei other-while
Pleyden, the parfiter to be · in many places.
Ac if there were any wight · that wolde me telle
What were Dowel and Dobet · and Dobest atte laste,
Wolde I neuere do werke · but wende to holicherche,
And there bydde my bedes · but whan ich eet or slepe.'

B. 21. Seid L; Seide W.

PASSUS XV.

Incipit passus quintus de Dowel.

'ICH am Ymaginatif,' quath he · 'ydel was ich neuere,
Thauh ich sitte by my-self · suche is my grace;
Ich haue yfolwed the in faith · more than fourty wynter,
And wissede the ful ofte · what Dowel was to mene,
And counsailede the for Cristes sake · no creature to by-gyle,
Nother to lye nother to lacke · ne lere that is defendid,
Ne to spille speche · as to speke an ydel,
And no tyme to tyne · ne trewe thyng to teenen;
Lowe the to lyue forth · in the lawe of holychurche;
Thenne dost thow wel, with-oute drede · ho can do bet, no forse!
Clerkes that connen al · ich hope thei conne do bettere;
Ac hit suffiseth to be saued · and to be suche as ich tauhte.
Ac for to louye and lene · and lyue wel and by-leyue,
Ys ycallid *Caritas* · Kynde Loue in English;
And that is Dobet, yf eny suche be · a blessed man, that helpeth
That pees be and pacience · and poure with-oute defaute;
Beatius est dare quam petere.

C. 2. ich sitt E; i sitte MT; ysete P. 3. yfolwede P. 5. counsalede P. 8. tyne EMIKTS; tene P. trywe P. 10. bett P. 13. an (*for 2nd* and) P. 14. ycalid P. 16. That IMKST; And PE.

'Poule in his pistle,' quod he · 'preueth what is dowel;
Fides, spes, caritas; et maior horum, etc.
Feith, hope, and charitee · and alle ben good,
And sauen men sundry tymes · ac none so sone as charite.
For he doth wel with-oute doute · that doth as lewte techeth;
That is, if thow be man maried · thi make thow louye,
And lyue forth as lawe wole · while ȝe lyuen bothe.
Riȝt so, if thow be religious · renne thow neuere ferther
To Rome ne to Rochemadore · but as thi reule techeth,
And holde the vnder obedyence · that heigh wey is to heuene.
And if thow be mayden to marye · and miȝte wel contynue,
Seke thow neuere seynt forther · for no soule helthe.
For what made Lucyfer · to lese the heigh heuene,
Or Salamon his sapience · or Sampson his strengthe?
Iob the Iewe his ioye · dere he it abouȝte,
Arestotle and other mo · Ypocras, & Virgyle;
Alisaundre that al wan · elengelich ended.
Catel and kynde witte · was combraunce to hem alle.
Felyce hir fayrnesse · fel hir al to sklaundre;
And Rosamounde riȝt so · reufully bysette,
The bewte of hir body · in badnesse she dispended.
Of many suche I may rede · of men and of wommen,
That wyse wordes wolde shewe · and worche the contrarye,
Sunt homines nequam bene de virtute loquentes.
And riche renkes riȝt so · gaderen and sparen,
And tho men that thei moste haten · mynistren it atte laste;
And, for thei suffren & se · so many nedy folkes,
And loue hem nouȝt as owre lorde byt · lesen her soules;
Date et dabitur vobis, etc.
So catel and kende wit · acombreth ful many;
Wo is hym that hem weldeth · but if he hem wel despende;
Scientes et non facientes varijs flagellis vapulabunt;
Sapience, seith the boke · swelleth a mannes soule,
Sapiencia inflat, etc.;
And ricchesse riȝt so · but if the rote be trewe;
Ac grace is a grasse ther-of · tho greuaunces to abate.
Ac grace ne groweth nouȝte · but amonges lowe;
Pacience and pouerte · the place is there it groweth,

B. 57–59. *These lines are in* R *only, and in* C-text. 58. wel M; wil R.

Ac catel and kynde witt · encombreth ful menye;
Woo is hym that hem weldeth · bote he hem wel dispeyne;
Scientes et non facientes uariis flagellis uapulabunt.
Ac comunliche connynge · and vnkynde rychesse,
As, loreles to be lordes · and lewede men techeres,
And holy churche horen help · auerous and coueytous,
Droweth vp Dowel · and distruyeth Dobest.
Ac grace is a gras ther-fore · to don hem eft growe;
Ac grace groweth nat · til goode wil gynne reyne,
And wokie thorwe good werkes · wikkede hertes.

C. 18. hym (*for* hem) PE. 24. goode wil K; goode wille E; goud wille S; god wol PI.

And in lele-lyuynge men · and in lyf-holy,
And thorugh the gyfte of the holygoste · as the gospel telleth,
Spiritus vbi vult spirat, etc.
Clergye and Kynde Witte · comth of si3te and techynge,
As the boke bereth witnesse · to buirnes that can rede,
Quod scimus, loquimur; quod vidimus, testamur.
Of *quod scimus* cometh clergye · and connynge of heuene,
And of *quod vidimus* cometh kynde witte · of si3te of dyuerse peple.
Ac grace is a gyfte of god · and of gret loue spryngeth;
Knewe neuere clerke how it cometh forth · ne kynde witte the weyes,
Nescit aliquis vnde venit, aut quo vadit, etc.
Ac 3it is clergye to comende · and kynde witte bothe,
And namely clergye, for Crystes loue · that of clergye is rote.
For Moyses witnesseth that god wrote · for to wisse the peple,
In the olde lawe, as the lettre telleth · that was the lawe of Iewes,
That what woman were in auoutrie taken · were she riche or pore,
With stones men shulde hir stryke · and stone hir to deth.
A womman, as we fynden · was gulty of that dede,
Ac cryste of his curteisye · thorw clergye hir saued;
For thorw carectus that Cryst wrot · the Iewes knewe hemseluen
Gultier as afor god · and gretter in synne
Than the woman that there was · and wenten awey for schame.
The clergye that there was · conforted the womman.
Holykirke knoweth this · that Crystes writyng saued;
So clergye is conforte · to creatures that repenten,
And to mansed men · myschief at her ende.
For goddes body my3te nou3te be · of þred, withouten clergye,
The which body is bothe · bote to the ri3tful,
And deth and dampnacioun · to hem that dyeth yuel.
As Crystes carecte conforted and bothe · coupable shewed
The womman that the Iewes brou3te · that Iesus thou3te to saue;
Nolite iudicare, et non iudicabimini, etc.
Ri3t so goddes body, bretheren · but it be worthily taken,
Dampneth vs atte daye of dome · as the carectes dede the iewes.
For-thi I conseille the for Cristes sake · Clergye that thow louye,
For Kynde Witte is of his kyn · and neighe cosynes bothe

B. 69. dyuese (*sic*) L.

Ac er suche a wil wexe · god hym-self worcheth,
And sent forth seint espirit · to don loue sprynge;
Spiritus ubi uult spirat, et cetera.
So grace, with-oute grace · of god and of good werkes,
May nat bee, bee thow siker · thauh we bidde euere.
Cleregie cometh bote of siht · and kynde witt of sterres,
As to be bore other bygete · in suche constellacion,
That wit wexeth ther-of · and othere wyrdes bothe;
Uultus huius seculi sunt subiecti uultibus celestibus.

So grace is a gyfte of god · and kynde witt a chaunce,
And cleregye and connyng · of kynde wittes techynge.

And ȝut is cleregie to comende · for Cristes loue, more
Than eny connynge of kynde witt · bote cleregie hit ruwele.
For Moyses wittnesseth that god wrot · in stoon with hus fynger,
Lawe of loue oure lorde wrot · longe er Crist were.

And Crist cam and confermede · and holy kirke made,
And in sond a sygne wrot · and seide to the Iewes,
'That seeth hym-self synneles · cesse nat, ich hote,
To stryke with stoon other with staf · this strompet to dethe;'
Qui uestrum sine peccato est mittat in eam lapidem, &c. cetera.

For-thi ich consaile alle Cristene · cleregie to honoure;

C. 26. wil MKST; will wol P. 27. sent EKST; send PM. 32. wyrdus S; wirdes K; wordes (*badly*) PEIT (*wyrdes* = destinies). 35. fore P. 39. kirke I; churche PEFS. 42. strompett P. *mittat—lapidem* in E only. 43. consaily P; *see* l. 64.

To owre lorde, leue me; · for-thi loue hem, I rede;
For bothe ben as miroures · to amenden owre defautes,
And lederes for lewed men · and for lettred bothe.
For-thi lakke thow neuere logyke · lawe, ne his custumes,
Ne countreplede clerkes · I conseille the for eure.
For as a man may nou3t se · that mysseth his eyghen,
Namore can no klerke · but if he cau3t it first thorugh bokes.
Al-though men made bokes · god was the maistre,
And seynt spirit the saumplarye · and seide what men sholde write.
And ri3t as sy3te serueth a man · to se the heighe strete,
Ri3t so ledeth letterure · lewed men to resoun.
And as a blynde man in bataille · bereth wepne to fi3te,
And hath none happ with his axe · his enemye to hitte,
Namore kan a kynde-witted man · but clerkes hym teche,
Come for al his kynde witte · to Crystendome and be saued;
Whiche is the coffre of Crystes tresore · and clerkes kepe the keyes,
To vnlouken it at her lykynge · and to the lewed peple
3yue mercy for her mysdedes · if men it wole aske
Buxomelich and benygneliche · and bidden it of grace.
Archa-dei in the olde lawe · Leuites it kepten;
Hadde neuere lewed man leue · to leggen honde on that chest,
But he were preste or prestes sone · patriarke or prophete.
Saul, for he sacrifised · sorwe hym be-tydde,
And his sones al-so · for that synne myscheued,
And many mo other men · that were no Leuites,
That with *archa-dei* 3eden · in reuerence and in worchippe,
And leyden honde ther-on to liften it vp · and loren hir lif after.
For-thi I conseil alle creatures · no clergie to dispise,
Ne sette schort be here science · what so thei don hemselue.
Take we her wordes at worthe · for here witnesse be trewe,
And medle we nau3t muche with hem · to meuen any wrathe,
Lest cheste chafen vs · to choppe vche man other;
Nolite tangere christos meos, etc.
For Clergye is kepere · vnder Cryst of heuene;
Was there neuere no kny3te · but Clergye hym made.

B. 118–127. *These lines in* R *only and in* **C**-text. 126. medele we M; ne medle we R. 127. chasen R; *see* **C**-text.

For as a man may nat seo · that mysseth hus eyen,
No more can no clerkes · bote if hit be of bookes.
And thauh men maden bokes · god was here maister,
And seynte spirit the saumplarie · and seide what men sholde wryte.
And ryght as syht serueth a man · to see the hye strete,
Ryght so lereth lettrure · lewede men to reson.
And as a blynde man in batayle · bereth wepne to fyghte,
And hath non hap with hus axe · hus enemy to hitte;
No more can a kynde-witted man · bote clerkes hym teche,
Come for alle hus kynde wyttes · thorwe Cristendom to be saued;
The whiche is cofre of Cristes tresour · and clerkes kepen the keyes,
To vnlouke hit at here lykynge · the lewede and lerede to helpe,
To ȝeue mercy for mysdedes · yf men wolde hit aske
Buxumliche and benygneliche · and bydden hit of grace.
Archa-dei in the olde lawe · Leuites hit kepten;
Hadde neuere lewede man leue · to legge honde on that cheste,
Bote hit were preeste other preestes sone · patriarck other prophete.
Saul, for he sacrifisede · sorwe hym by-tydde,
And hus sones for hus synnes · sorwe they hadden;
And alle lewede that leyde hond theron · loren lyf after.
For-thy ich consaille alle creatures · no clerk to dispise,
Ne sette short by here science · what so thei don hemselue.
Take we here wordes a worth · for here wittnesses ben trewe,
And medle we nat moche with hem · to meeuen eny wratthe,
Leste cheste chaufe ous so · and choppe ech man othere;
And do we as Dauid techeth · for doute of godes veniaunce;
Nolite tangere Cristos meos, &c.
For Cleregie is Cristes vikery · to conforte and to curen;
Bothe lered and lewed were lost · yf cleregie ne were.

C. 45. if IKG; ȝif EMT; P *om.* 53. sauede P. 59. on IMKT; in PES. 60. preestes PEIST; prest MK. 63. *From* IKT; *not in* P. 66. trywe P.

Ac Kynde Witte cometh · of alkynnes si3tes,
Of bryddes and of bestes · of tastes of treuthe, and of deceytes.
Lyueres to-forn vs · vseden to marke
The selkouthes that thei seighen · her sones for to teche,

And helden it an heighe science · her wittes to knowe.
Ac thorugh her science sothely · was neuere no soule ysaued,
Ne brou3te by þer bokes · to blisse ne to ioye;
For alle her kynde knowynges · come but of dyuerse sightes.

Patriarkes and prophetes · repreued her science,
And seiden, her wordes ne her wisdomes · was but a folye;
As to the clergye of Cryst · counted it but a trufle;
Sapiencia huius mundi, stulticia est apud deum.
For the heihe holigoste · heuene shal to-cleue,
And loue shal lepe out after · in-to this lowe erthe,
And clennesse shal cacchen it · and clerkes shullen it fynde;
Pastores loquebantur ad inuicem.
He speketh there of riche men ri3t nou3t · ne of ri3t witty,
Ne of lordes that were lewed men · but of the hexte lettred oute,
Ibant magi ab oriente, etc.
If any frere were founde there · ich 3if the fyue shillynges;
Ne in none beggares cote · was that barne borne,
But in a burgeys place · of Bethlem the best;
Set non erat locus eis in diuersorio; et pauper non habet diuersorium.
To pastours and to poetes · appiered that aungel,
And bad hem go to Bethlem · goddis burth to honoure,
And songe a songe of solas · *gloria in excelsis deo!*
Riche men rutte tho · and in here reste were,
Tho it schon to the schepherdes · a schewer of blisse.
Clerkes knewe it wel · and comen with here presentz,
And deden her homage honourablely · to hym that was almy3ty.
Why I haue tolde the al this— · I toke ful gode hede
How thow contraryedest Clergye · with crabbed wordes,
"How that lewed men li3tloker · than lettred were saued,

B. 139. was R; nas LWCROB; *but observe the alliteration.* 140. *est* WCB; LRO *om.* 148. *eis* from the Vulgate; LCOB *om.* 152, 153. *These lines in* R *only; and in* C-text. 153. þe M; R *om.* 156. þe CRB; LW *om.*

Kynde-wittede men han · a cleregie by hem-selue;
Of cloudes and of custumes · thei contreuede meny thynges,
And markede hit in here manere · and mused ther-on to knowe.
And of the selcouthes that thei seyen · here sones ther-of thei tauhte,
Thei helden hit for an hey science · here soteltes to knowe.
Ac thorw here science sothliche · was neuere soule ysaued,
Ne brouht thorwe here bokes · to blisse ne to ioye.
For al here kynde knowyng · cam bote of diuerse sightes
Of briddes and of bestes · of blisse and of sorwe.
Patriarkes and prophetes · reprouede here science,
And seide here wordes and here wysdomes · ne was bote al folye;
As to the cleregie of Cryst · thei countede hit bote a trufle;
Sapientia huius mundi stultitia est apud deum.
For the hye holygost · shall heuene to-cleue,
And loue shal leepe out after · in-to this lowe erthe,
And clannesse shal cacchen hit · and clerkes shullen hit fynde;
Pastores loquebantur ad inuicem, et cet.
Hit speketh of riche men ryght nouht · ne of riche lordes,
Bote of clennesse and of clerkes · and kepers of bestes;
Ibant magi ab oriente, et cetera.
Yf eny frere were founde there · ich ȝeue the fyue shyllinges!
Nother in cote nother in caytyf hous · was Crist y-bore,
Bote in a burgeises hous · the beste of alle the toune.

To pastours and to poetes · aperede the angel,
And bad hem go to Bedlehem · godes burthe to honoure,
And songen a song of solas · *Gloria in excelsis deo!*
Riche men routten tho · and in here reste were,
Tho hit shon to the shepehurdes · a shewere of blisse.
Clerkes knewen the comete · and comen with here presentes,
And dude here homage honorably · to hym that was almyghty.
Whi ich haue ytold the al this · ich took ful good hede,
How thow contrariedest Cleregie · with crabbede wordes,
That is, how lewede men and luthere · lyghtloker were saued

C. 75. selcouthes MEKSTG; selcouthe P. 79. PE *insert* ne *before* cam. 80. PE *om. 2nd* of. 89. PE *om.* the. 94. songen M; songe IT; syngen PEK. 101. lyghlokere P (*sic*). sauede P.

Than clerkes or kynde-witted men · of Crystene peple."
And thow seidest soth of somme · ac se in what manere:—
Take two stronge men · and in Themese caste hem,
And bothe naked as a nedle · her none sykerer than other,
That one hath connynge · and can swymmen and dyuen,
That other is lewed of that laboure · lerned neuere swymme;
Which trowestow of tho two · in Themese is in moste drede?
He that neuere ne dyued · ne nou3t can of swymmynge,
Or the swymmere that is sauf · bi so hym-self lyke,
There his felaw flet forth · as the flode lyketh,
And is in drede to drenche · that neuere dede swymme?'
'That swymme can nou3t,' I seide · 'it seemeth to my wittes.'
'Ri3t so,' quod the renke · 'resoun it sheweth,
That he that knoweth clergye · can sonner aryse
Out of synne and be sauf · though he synne ofte,
If hym lyketh and lest · than any lewed lelly.
For if the clerke be konnynge · he knoweth what is synne,
And how contricioun with-oute confessioun conforteth the soule,
As thow seest in the sauter · in psalme one or tweyne,
How contricioun is commended · for it caccheth awey synne;
Beati quorum remisse sunt iniquitates, et quorum tecta sunt peccata, etc.
And this conforteth vch a clerke · and keuereth hym fram wanhope,
In which flode the fende · fondeth a man hardest;
There the lewed lith stille · and loketh after lente,
And hath no contricioun ar he come to shryfte · and thanne can he litel telle,
And as his lores-man leres hym · bileueth and troweth;
And that is after person or parisch prest · and, parauenture bothe
Vnconnynge to lere lewed men · as Luk bereth witnesse,
Dum cecus ducit cecum, ambo in foueam cadunt.
Wo was hym marked · that wade mote with the lewed!
Wel may the barne blisse · that hym to boke sette;
That lyuynge after letterure · saued hym lyf and soule!
Dominus pars hereditatis mee · is a meri verset,
That has take fro Tybourne · twenti stronge theues;
There lewed theues ben lolled vp · loke how thei be saued!

B. 162. syker L; sikerer WCOB. bothe R; LWCB *om.*; cf. C-text. 178. *peccata* in R only. 184. *cadunt* I have supplied. 185. *ambo in foueam* in OC_2 only;

Than connynge clerkes · of kynde vnderstondyng;
And thow seidest soth of somme · ac ich seye in what manere.
Take two stronge men · and in Temese cast hem,
And bothe naked as a nelde · here nother heuyour than other;
That on hath connynge · and can swimmen and dyuen,
That other is lewede of that labour · and lernede neuere swymme;
Which is, trowest thow, of tho two · in Temese most in drede?'
'He that can nat swymme,' ich seyde · 'hit semeth to alle wittes.'
'Ryght so,' quath that renke · 'reson hit sheweth,
That he that knoweth cleregie · can sonnere a-ryse
Out of synne, and be saf · thow he synegy ofte,
If hym lyketh and lust · than eny lewede sothliche.
For yf the clerk be connynge · and knoweth what is synne,
And hou contricion with-oute confession · conforteth the soule,
As we seen in the sauter · in psalmes on other tweye,
How contricion is comended · for hit caccheth a-wey synne,
Beati quorum remisse sunt iniquitates, et quorum tecta sunt peccata, &c.:
And that comforteth ech a clerk · and keuereth fro wanhope,
In whiche flood the feend · fondeth man hardest,
Ther the lewede lyeth stille · and loketh after lente,
And hath no contricion · ar he come to shryfte;
And than can he lytel telle · of on other of other,
Bote as his loresman lereth hym · he by-leyueth and troweth;
And that is after person other pareshe-preest · and paraunter bothe beth lewede
For to lere lewede men · as Luc bereth wittnesse;
Si cecus ducit cecum, ambo in foueam cadent:
For muche woo was hym marked · that wade shal with the lewede.
Wel may the barn blesse · that hym to book sette;
That lyuynge after lettrure · sauede hym lyf and soule!
Dominus pars hereditatis mee · ys a murye verset,
Hit hath ytake fro Tyborne · twenty stronge theeues;
Ther lewede theeues ben lollid vp · loke how thei been sauede!

C. 104. two STG; to PEMK. 108. two STK; to PEM. 117. caccheth MIKSG; chacheth P. *et—peccata* E. 118. a IKST; PEMG *om.* koeuereþ P. 129. versett P.

The thef that had grace of god · on Gode Fryday as thow speke,
Was, for he ȝelte hym creaunt to Cryst on the crosse · and knew-
leched hym gulty,
And grace axed of god · that to graunten it is redy
To hem that boxomeliche biddeth it · and ben in wille to
amenden hem.
Ac though that thef had heuene · he hadde none heigh blisse,
As seynt Iohan and other seyntes · that asserued hadde bettere.
Riȝt as sum man ȝeue me mete · and sette me amydde the flore,
Ich haue mete more than ynough · ac nouȝt so moche worship
As tho that seten atte syde-table · or with the souereignes of
the halle,
But sitte as a begger bordelees · bi my-self on the grounde.
So it fareth bi that feloun · that a Gode Fryday was saued;
He sit neither with seynt Iohan · Symonde, ne Iude,
Ne wyth maydenes ne with martires · confessoures ne wydwes,
But by hym-self as a soleyne · and serued on the erthe.
For he that is ones a thef · is euermore in daungere,
And as lawe lyketh · to lyue or to deye;
De peccato propiciato, noli esse sine metu.
And forto seruen a seynt · and such a thef togyderes,
It were noyther resoun ne riȝt · to rewarde hem bothe aliche.
And riȝt as *Troianus* the trewe knyȝt · tilde nouȝt depe in
helle,
That owre lorde ne had hym liȝtlich oute · so leue I the thef be
in heuene.
For he is in the lowest of heuene · if owre bileue be trewe,
And wel loselyche he lolleth there · by the lawe of holy-cherche,
Quia reddit vnicuique iuxta opera sua, etc.
And why that one thef on the crosse · creaunt hym ȝelt
Rather than that other thef · though thow wolde appose,
Alle the clerkes vnder Cryst · ne couthe the skil assoille;
Quare placuit, quia voluit.
And so I sey by the · that sekest after the whyes,
And aresonedest Resoun · a rebukyng as it were,

B. 194. þat—is *from* W; and he is euer LCOB. 195. To hem *from* W. LCROB *om.* 197. *In margin of* L—*in domo meo multe sunt mantiones.* 203. sit WC; sitte L.

The theef that hadde grace of god · a Goode Fryday, as thow toldest,
Was, for he ȝelde hym creaunt to Crist · and hus grace askede.
And god is ay gracious · to alle that gredeth to hym,
He wol no wickede man be lost · bote yf he wol hym-self;
Nolo mortem peccatoris, sed ut magis conuertatur et uiuat.
And thauh the theef hadde heuene · he hadde non hye blisse
As seynt Iohan and other seyntes · that han a-serued bettere.
Ryght as som man ȝyueth me mete · and set me a-mydde the floor,
Ich haue mete more than ynowe · ac nat with so muche worshup
As tho that sytten at the syd-table · other with the souereynes in halle,
Bote, as a beggere, bordles · by my-self vpon the grounde.
So hit ferde by the felon · that a Goode Fryday was saued;
He sit nother with seynt Iohan · with Symon ne with Iude,
Ne with maydenes ne with martris · ne with mylde wydewes,
Bote as a soleyn by hym-self · and serued vp-on the grounde.
For he that ys ones a theef · is euere-more in daunger,
And as the lawe lyketh · to lyue other to deye,
De peccato propiciato noli esse sine metu;
And for to seruen a seynt · and suche a theef to-gederes,
Hit were no reson ne ryght · to rewarde bothe yliche.
Ryȝt as *Traianus*, the trewe knyght · tulde nat deep in helle,
That oure lord ne hadde hym lyghtliche out · so leyueth of the theef in heuene.
For he ys in the lowest heuene · yf oure byleyue beo trewe,
And wel loseliche lolleth there · as by the lawe of holy-churche;
Et reddet unicuique secundum opera sua.
Ac whi that one theef vp-on the croys · creaunt hym ȝelde
Rather than that other · thauh thou woldest apose,
Alle the clerkes vnder Crist · ne couthe thys asoile;
Quare placuit, quia uoluit, etc.
And so ich seye by the · that sekest after weyes,
How creatures han kynde witt · and clerkes comen to bokes,

C. 133. ȝelde EIKG; ȝald T; ȝuld P. hem (*for* hym) P. 137. a-seruede P. 138. sett P. 142. sauede P. 143. sit IMKSTG; sat P. 145. seruede P. 149. yliche IKSEG; liche P. 150, 152. trywe P. 153. loseliche K; losliche P; louslich E; loslich S; lifliche I; loueliche MT. *reddet* EIKMST; *reddit* P. 154. one I; o T; PEMSKG *om.* 158. han IKG; and PEMS.

And of the floures in the fryth · and of her feire hewes,
Where-of thei cacche her coloures · so clere and so bri3te,
And willest of briddes and of bestes · and of hire bredyng to knowe,
Why somme be alowe and somme alofte · thi lykyng it were,
And of the stones and of the sterres · thow studyest, as I leue,
How euere beste or brydde · hath so breme wittes:
Clergye ne kynde witte · ne knewe neuere the cause,
Ac Kynde knoweth the cause hym-selue · and no creature elles.
He is the pyes patroun · and putteth it in hire ere,
That there the thorne is thikkest · to buylden and brede;
And Kynde kenned the pecok · to cauken in swich a kynde,
And kenned Adam · to knowe his pryue membres,
And tau3te hym and Eue · to hylien hem with leues.
Lewed men many tymes · maistres thei apposen,
Why Adam ne hiled nou3te firste · his mouth that eet the apple,
Rather than his lykam a-low · lewed axen thus clerkes;
Kynde knoweth whi he dede so · ac no clerke elles.
Ac of briddes and of bestes · men by olde tyme
Ensamples token and termes · as telleth this poetes,
And that the fairest foule · foulest engendreth,
And feblest foule of flyght is · that fleegheth or swymmeth;
And that is the pekok and the pohenne · proude riche men thei bitokneth,
For the pekok, and men pursue hym · may nou3te fleighe heighe;
For the traillyng of his taille · ouertaken is he sone,
And his flesshe is foule flesshe · and his feet bothe,
And vnlouelich of ledene · and laith for to here.
Ri3t so the riche · if he his ricchesse kepe,
And deleth it nou3t tyl his deth-day · the taille of al sorwe.
Ri3t as the pennes of the pecok · peyneth hym in his fli3te,
So is possessioun payne · of pens and of nobles
To alle hem that it holdeth · til her taille be plukked.
And though the riche repente thanne · and bi̇rewe the tyme,
That euere he gadered so grete · and gaf there of so litel,
Though he crye to Cryst thanne · with kene wille, I leue
His ledne be in owre lordes ere · lyke a pyes chiteryng.

B. 226. and WCOB; LR *om.* 247. peyneth WOB; payned LR. 253. chiteryng W; LCROB *om.*

And how the floures in the fritth · cometh to feyre hewes;
Was neuere creature vnder Cryst · that knew wel the bygynnynge
Bote Kynde, that contreeuede hit furst · of corteise wil.
He tauhte the tortle to trede · the pokok to cauke,
And Adam and Eue · and other bestes alle
A cantel of kynde witt · here kynde to saue.
Of good and of wikke · Kynde was the ferste,
He seih hit and suffrede hit · and seide hit bee sholde;
Quia ipse dixit, et facta sunt; ipse mandauit, et creata sunt.
Ac whi he wolde that wikkede were · ich wene and ich leyue,
Was neuere man vpon molde · that myghte hit aspye.

Ac longe-lybbynge men · lyknede mennes lyuynge
To bryddes and to bestes · as here bokes telleth,
That the fayrest fowel · foulest engendreth,
And feblest fowel of flicht is · that fleeth othere swymmeth.
That is, the pokok and the popeiay · with here proude federes
By-tokneth ryght riche men · that regnen here on erthe.
For porsewe a pocok · other a pohen to cacche,
And haue hem in haste · at thyn owene wil;
For thei may nat fleo fer · ne ful hye nother,
For here fetheres that faire ben · to fle fer hem letteth.
Hus leedene is vnloueliche · and lothliche hus caroigne;
Ac for hus peyntede pennes · the pocok is honoured
More than for hus faire flesch · other for hus murye note.
Ryght so men reuerenceth more the ryche · for hus muche meeble
Than for the kyn that he cam of · other for hus kynde wittes.
Thus the poete preiseth · the pocok for hus federes,
And the riche for hus rentes · othere rychesse in hus schoppe.

C. 161. corteise ES; cortese K; curteis MI; korteis G; cortesie P. 172. fleeth IM; fleth ET; flucht P. 173. pookoc P; pecok KTG. withe P. 177. fer IMSTG; fur P. 178. fer IMSTG; feer P. 180. pennes IT; fetheres PEMSKG (*badly*). his honourede P. 183. fore (*for 2nd* for) P. 185. fore P. schoppe EMKSG; sheepe P.

And whan his caroigne shal come · in caue to be buryed,
I leue it flaumbe ful foule · the folde al aboute,
And alle the other ther it lyth · enuenymeth thorgh his attere.
By the po feet is vnderstonde · as I haue lerned in Auynete,
Excecutoures, fals frendes · that fulfille nouȝt his wille
That was writen, and thei witnesse · to worche riȝt as it wolde.
Thus the poete preues that the pecok · for his fetheres is reuerenced,
Riȝt so is the riche · bi resoun of his godis.
The larke, that is a lasse foule · is more louelich of ledne,
And wel awey of wenge · swifter than the pecok,
And of flesch, by fele folde · fatter and swetter.
To lowe-lybbyng men · the larke is resembled;
Arestotle the grete clerke · suche tales he telleth;
Thus he lykneth in his logyk · the leste foule oute.
And where he be sauf or nouȝt sauf · the sothe wote no clergye,
Ne of Sortes ne of Salamon · no scripture can telle.
Ac god is so good, I hope · that sitth he gaf hem wittis
To wissen vs weyes there-with · (that wissen vs to be saued,
And the better for her bokes) · to bidden we ben holden,
That god for his grace · gyue her soules reste;
For lettred men were lewed men ȝut · ne were lore of her bokes.'
'Alle thise clerkes,' quod I tho · 'that on Cryst leuen,
Seggen in her sarmones · that noyther Sarasenes ne Iewes,
Ne no creature of Cristes lyknesse · with-outen Crystendome worth saued.'
'*Contra*,' quod Ymagynatyf tho · and comsed for to loure,
And seyde, '*saluabitur vix iustus in die iudicij.*
Ergo saluabitur,' quod he · and seyde namore Latyne.
'Troianus was a trewe knyȝte · and toke neuere Cristendome,
And he is sauf, so seith the boke · and his soule in heuene.
For there is fullyng of fonte · and fullyng in blode-shedynge,
And thorugh fuire is fullyng · and that is ferme bileue;
Aduenit ignis diuinus, non comburens, sed illuminans, etc.
Ac trewth that trespassed neuere · ne transuersed aȝeines his lawe,
But lyueth as his lawe techeth · and leueth there be no bettere,
And if there were, he wolde amende · and in suche wille deyeth,

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B. 256. enuenymeþ WCOB; enuenymed LR. 257. po feet WR; profeet (!) L.

The larke, that is a lasse fowel · is loueloker of lydene,
And swettur of sauour · and swyfter of wynge.
To lowe-lyuynge men · the larke is resembled,
And to leelle and to lyf-holy · that louen alle treuthe.
Thus Porfirie and Plato · and poetes menye
Lykneth in here logyk · the leeste fowel oute.
And whether hij be saf other nat saf · the sothe wot nat clergie,
Ne of Sortes, ne of Salamon · no scripture can telle
Whether thei be in helle other in heuene; · other Aristotle the wise.
Ac god is so good, ich hope · sitthe he gaf hem wittes
To wissen ous weyes ther-with · that wenen to be saued,
And the bettere for here bookes— · to bidden we been holde
That god for hus grace · gyue here saules reste;
For lettred men were but lewede men ȝut · ne were the lore of tho clerkes.'
'Alle these clerkes,' quath ich tho · 'that on Crist byleyuen,
Seggen in here sarmons · that nother Sarrasyns ne Iewes
With-oute baptisme, as by here bokes · beeth nat ysaued.'
'*Contra*,' quath Ymaginatif tho · and comsed to loure,
And seide, '*uix saluabitur iustus in die iudicii*';
Ergo saluabitur,' quath he · and seide no more Latyn.
'Traianus was a trewe knyght · and took neuere Crystendome,
And he is saf, seith the bok · and his soule in heuene.
Ther is follyng of font · and follyng in blod-shedynge,
And thorw fuyr is follyng · and al is ferm by-leyue;
Aduenit ignis diuinus, non comburens sed illuminans.
Ac treuthe, that trespassede neuere · ne transuersede aȝens the lawe,
Bote lyuede as his lawe tauhte · and leyueth ther be no bettere,
And yf ther were, he wolde · and in suche a wil deyeth—

C. 192. wether P. 194. Wether P. *After* l. 194 S *inserts these five lines, which occur also in the* Duke of Westminster's MS.:—

Iob was a paynym · and plesede god a prys,
And aristele (*sic*) al-so · sewede þe same secte,
And lad ful holy lyf · aftur lawe of kynde,
Where-fore hit semeþ soþly · by sondry skylus to schewe
Þat he is saf as was Iob · I can not seye þe soþe.

196. sauede P. 198. gyue MS; ȝyue K; ȝeue I; ȝiue T; gyf (*badly*) P. 200. theese P. 205. triwe P. 206. is (*for* his) P. 207. of (*for* in) P. 210. lyuede IT; leuede MG; leyuede P. P *om.* his. leyue (*for* leyueth) P.

Ne wolde neuere trewe god · but treuth were allowed;
And where it worth or worth nou3t · the bileue is grete of treuth,
And an hope hangyng ther-inne · to haue a mede for his treuthe.
For, *Deus dicitur quasi dans vitam eternam suis, hoc est, fidelibus; et alibi;*
si ambulauero in medio vmbre mortis, etc.
The glose graunteth vpon that vers · a gret mede to treuthe,
And witt and wisdome,' quod that wye · 'was somme tyme tresore,
To kepe with a comune · no katel was holde bettere,
And moche murth and manhod:'—and ri3t with that he vanesched.

B. 289. &c. CROB; LW. *om.*

Wolde neuere trewe god · bote trewe treuthe were a-lowed.
And where hit worth other nat worth · the by-leyue is gret of treuthe,
And hope hongeth ay ther-on · to haue that treuthe deserueth;
Quia super pauca fidelis fuisti, supra multa te constituam:
And that is loue and large huyre · yf the lord be trewe,
And cortesie more than couenant was · what so clerkes carpen;
For al worth as god wole'— · and ther-with he vanshede.

Hic explicit passus quintus de Dowel.

C. 212. a-lowede P.

PASSUS XIII.

Passus terciodecimus.

AND I awaked there-with · witles nerehande,
And as a freke that fre were · forth gan I walke
In manere of a mendynaunt · many a ȝere after,
And of this metyng many tyme · moche thouȝt I hadde.
First, how Fortune me failled · at my moste nede,
And how that Elde manaced me · myȝt we euere meten;

And how that freris folwed · folke that was riche,
And folke that was pore · at litel prys thei sette,
And no corps in her kirkeȝerde · ne in her kyrke was buryed,
But quikke he biquethe hem auȝte · or shulde helpe quyte her dettes.

And how this coueitise ouercome · clerkes and prestes,
And how that lewed men ben ladde · but owre lorde hem helpe,
Thorugh vnkonnynge curatoures · to incurable peynes.
And how that Ymagynatyf · in dremeles me tolde,
Of Kynde and of his connynge · and how curteise he is to bestes,

And how louynge he is to bestes · on londe and on water;
Leueth he no lyf · lasse ne more;
The creatures that crepen · of Kynde ben engendred.
And sitthen how Ymagynatif seyde · *vix iustus saluabitur*,
And whan he had seyde so · how sodeynelich he passed.
I lay down longe in this thouȝte · and atte laste I slepte,
And, as Cryste wolde, there come Conscience · to conforte me that tyme,
And bad me come to his courte · with Clergye sholde I dyne.
And for Conscience of Clergye spake · I come wel the rather,

PASSUS XVI.

Incipit passus sextus de dowel.

AND ich awakede ther-with · wittlees ner hande;
As a frek that feye were · forth gan ich walke
In manere of a mendinaunt · meny ȝeres after.
And meny tyme of this meteles · muche thouhte ich hadde;
Furst, how Fortune me failede · at my moste neede,
And how Elde manacede me · so myghte happe,
That, yf ich lyuede longe · leue me by-hynde,
And vanshie alle myne vertues · and myne faire lockes.
And how that freres folweden · folk that was ryche,
And peuple that was poure · at lytel prys setten;
Ne corses of poure comune · in here kirke-ȝerd moste ligge,
Bote yf he quike by-quethe hem auht · other wolde helpe aquite here dettes.
And how this couetise ouer-cam · alle kynne sectes,
As wel lerede as lewede · and lord as the bonde.
And how that lewede men ben ladde · bote oure lord hem helpe,
Thorow vnconnynge curatours · to incurable peynes.
And how that Ymaginatif · in dremeles me tolde
Of Kynde and of hus connynge · and what connynge he ȝaf to bestes,
How louynge he is to eche lyf · a londe and a watere;
For alle he wisseth and ȝeueth wit · that walketh other crepeth.
And ich meruailede in herte · how Ymagynatif saide,
That *iustus* by-fore Iesu · *in die iudicii*
Non saluabitur · bote *uix* helpe;
And, whanne he hadde seide so · how sodeynlich he vanshede;
And so ich mused vpon this matere · that me luste to slepe.
Thenne cam Conscience · and Cleregie after,
And beden me ryse and rome · for with Reson sholde ich dyne.
And ich a-ros and romed forth · with Reson we mette.

C. 6. so—happe IMKSG; so longe myghte ich happe PE. 7. lyuede IMKSTG; leuede P. 11. kirke IT; churche PES. 13. ow (*for* how) P. 17. that IKTG; P *om.* 19. is IMKSTG; was PE. 28. we EIMKSTG; ich P.

And there I say a maistre · what man he was I neste,
That lowe louted · and loueliche to Scripture.
Conscience knewe hym wel · and welcomed hym faire;
Thei wesshen and wypeden · and wenten to the dyner.
Ac Pacience in the paleis stode · in pilgrymes clothes,
And preyde mete for charite · for a pore heremyte.
Conscience called hym in · and curteisliche seide,
'Welcome, wye, go and wasshe · thow shalt sitte sone.'
This maister was made sitte · as for the moste worthy,
And thanne Clergye and Conscience · and Pacience cam after.
Pacience and I · were put to be macches,
And seten by owre selue · at a syde-borde.
Conscience called after mete · and thanne cam Scripture,
And serued hem thus sone · of sondry metes manye,
Of Austyn, of Ambrose · of alle the foure euangelistes;
Edentes & bibentes que apud eos sunt.
Ac this maister ne his man · no manere flesshe eten,
Ac thei ete mete of more coste · mortrewes and potages;
Of that men mys-wonne · thei made hem wel at ese.
Ac her sauce was ouer-soure · & vnsauourely grounde,
In a morter, *post-mortem* · of many bitter peyne,
But if thei synge for tho soules · and wepe salt teres:
Vos qui peccata hominum comeditis, nisi pro eis lacrimas et orationes effunderitis, ea que in delicijs comeditis, in tormentis euometis.
Conscience ful curteisly tho · comaunded Scripture
Bifor Pacience bred to brynge · and me that was his macche.
He sette a soure lof to-for vs · and seyde, '*agite penitenciam,*'
And sith he drough vs drynke · *diu-perseuerans.*
'As longe,' quod I, 'as I lyue · and lycame may dure!'
'Here is propre seruice,' quod Pacience · 'ther fareth no prynce bettere;'
And thanne he brou3t vs forth a mees of other mete · of *Miserere-mei-deus;*
And he brou3te vs of *Beati-quorum* · of *Beatus-virres* makynge,
Et-quorum-tecta-sunt- · *peccata* in a disshe
Of derne shrifte, *Dixi* · and *confitebor tibi!*
'Brynge Pacience some pitaunce' · pryueliche quod Conscience;

B. 32. wye WO; wye (*altered to* wyel 3e) L. 49. *diu* OB; *dia* LWR.

We reuerencede Reson · and romed forth softeliche,
And mette with a mayster · a man ylike a frere.
Conscience knew hym wel · and welcomede hym fayre;
Thei wisshen and wypeden · and wenten to the dyner.
Pacience as a poure thyng cam · and preide mete for charite,
Ylike to Peers Plouhman · as he a palmere were,
Crauede and criede · for Cristes loue of heuene,
A meles mete for a poure man · other moneye, yf thei hadden.
Conscience knew hym wel · and welcomede hem alle;
Thei wisshen and wipeden · and wenten and setten.
The maister was made to sitte furst · as for the most worthy;
Reson stod and stihlede · as for stywarde of halle.
Pacience and ich weren · yput to be mettes,
And seten by ous selue · at a syd-table.
Cleregie calde after mete · and thenne cam Scripture,
And seruede hem thus sone · of sondrie metes menie,
Of Austyn, of Ambrosie · of alle the foure euangelies,
Edentes et bibentes que apud illos sunt.
Ac of these metes this maister · myghte nat wel chewe;
For-thy he eet mete of more cost · mortrewes and potages.
Of that that men myswonne · thei maden hem wel at ese,
Ac here sauce was ouere-soure · and vnsauerliche grounde,
In a morter, *post-mortem* · of meny bitere peynes,
Bote yf thei synge for tho soules · and wepe salte teeres;
Uos qui peccata hominum comeditis, nisi pro eis lacrimas effuderitis, ea que in delicijs comeditis; in tormentis euometis.
Thenne Reson radde · ryght a-non after,
That Conscience comaunde sholde · to do come Scripture,
And brynge bred for Pacience · bytynde apartie,
And to me that was hus mette tho · and other mete bothe.
He sette a soure loof · and seide, '*agite penitentiam*,'
And sitthe he drow ous drynke · *diu-perseuerans*,
'As longe,' quath he, 'as the lyf · and the licame may dure.'
'This is a semeliche seruice!' · seide Pacience.

Thenne cam Contrition · that hadde coked for hem alle,

C. 32. wisshen T; wosshen P (*but see* l. 38). 34. he IMSTG; P *om.* 41. yputt P. 45. of EIKSG; and P. 46. thees P. 51. *euometis* ST; *en emergitis* (!) P. 57. he IMKSTG; PE *om.*

And thanne had Pacience a pitaunce · *pro-hac-orabit-ad-te-omnis-sanctus-in-tempore-oportuno ;*
And Conscience conforted vs · and carped vs mery tales,
Cor contritum et humiliatum, deus, non despicies.
Pacience was proude · of that propre seruice,
And made hym muirth with his mete · ac I morned euere,
For this doctoure on the heigh dese · dranke wyn so faste;
Ve vobis qui potentes estis ad bibendum vinum !
He eet many sondry metes · mortrewes and puddynges,
Wombe-cloutes and wylde braune · & egges yfryed with grece.
Thanne seide I to my-self · so Pacience it herde,
'It is nouȝt foure dayes that this freke · bifor the den of Poules,
Preched of penaunces · that Poule the apostle suffred,

In fame & frigore · and flappes of scourges;
Ter cesus sum, et a iudeis quinquies quadragenas, &c.
Ac o worde thei ouerhuppen · at ech a tyme that thei preche,
That Poule in his pistel · to al the peple tolde;
Periculum est in falsis fratribus.
Holywrit bit men be war · I wil nouȝt write it here
On Englisch, an auenture · it sholde be reherced to ofte,
And greue there-with that good men ben · ac gramarienes shul rede;
Vnusquisque a fratre se custodiat, quia, vt dicitur, periculum est in falsis fratribus.
Ac I wist neuere freke that as a frere ȝede · bifor men on Englisshe
Taken it for her teme · and telle it with-outen glosynge.
Thei prechen that penaunce · is profitable to the soule,
And what myschief and malese · Cryst for man tholed;

Ac this goddes gloton,' quod I · 'with his gret chekes,
Hath no pyte on vs pore · he perforneth yuel;
That he precheth he preueth nouȝt' · to Pacience I tolde,
And wisshed witterly · with wille ful egre,
That disshes and dobleres · bifor this ilke doctour,
Were molten led in his maw · and Mahoun amyddes!

B. 58. *humilitatum* L. 81. and *miswritten* a *in* L. 82. molten WCOB; moltoun L.

And brouhte forth a pitaunce · was *pro-hac-orabit-omnis-sanctus-in-tempore-oportuno.*
Conscience confortede ous · bothe Cleregie and Scripture,
And seide, '*cor contritum & humiliatum, deus, non despicies.*'
Pacience was wel apaied · of this propre seruyse,
And mad murye with this mete; · ac ich mournede euere,
For a doctor at the heye deys · drank wyn faste—
Ue uobis qui potentes estis ad bibendum uinum—
And ete meny sondry metes · mortrews and poddynges,
Braun and blod of the goos · bacon and colhoppes.
Then seide ich to my-self · that Pacience hit hurde,
'3ut is nat thre daies don · that this doctor prechede
At seint Paules by-for the peuple · what penaunce thei suffreden,
Alle that coueitede to come · to heuene hye ioye;
And how that Paul the apostle · what penaunce he tholede
For oure lordes loue · as holy lettrure telleth;
In fame et frigore, etc.
Ac me wondreth in my witt · whi that thei ne preche,
As Paul the apostel prechede · to the peuple ofte,
Periculum in falsis fratribus!
Holy writ bit men be war · and wisliche hem kepe,
That no fals frere · thorw flatrynge hem by-gyle;
Ac me is loth, thow ich Latyn knowe · to lacky eny secte,
For alle we ben brethren · thauh we be diuersliche clothede.
Ac ich wiste neuere freek · that frere is ycalled
Of the fyue mendynauns · and made eny sarmon,
That took this for his teme · and told hit with-oute glose.
Thei prechen that penaunce · is profitable for the soule,
And what meschief and what mal ese · Crist for man tholede.
Ac this doctor and diuinour · and decretistre of canon,
And al-so a gnedy gloton · with to grete chekes,
Hath no pite on vs poure · he perfourneth vuele;
That he precheth he proueth nat' · to Pacience ich tolde,
And wisshede witerliche · with a wil ful egre,
That in the mawe of that maister · alle tho metes were,
Disches and dobeleres · with alle the deyntes after!

C. 62. seide MIKSTG; seiden PE. 69. this IMESTG; thees P. 79. breythrene P. 80. ycallede P. 82. fore P. his IM; here PETG. 85. thes (*for* this) P. decretiste IMG; decretestre P. 89. whisshede P. 91. wit (*for* with) P.

'I shal Iangle to this Iurdan · with his Iust wombe,
To telle me what penaunce is · of which he preched rather.'—
Pacience perceyued what I thou3t · and wynked on me to be stille,
And seyde, 'thow shalt se thus sone . whan he may no more,
He shal haue a penaunce in his paunche · and puffe at ech a worde,
And thanne shullen his guttis godele · and he shal galpen after;
For now he hath dronken so depe · he wil deuyne sone,
And preuen it by her Pocalips · and passioun of seynt Auereys,

That neither bacoun ne braune · blancmangere ne mortrewes
Is noither fisshe ne flesshe · but fode for a penaunte.
And thanne shal he testifye of a trinitee · and take his felawe to witnesse,
What he fonde in a freyel · after a freres lyuynge,
And but if the fyrst lyne be lesyng · leue me neuere after!
And thanne is tyme to take · and to appose this doctoure
Of Dowel and of Dobet · and if Dobest be any penaunce.'—
And I sete stille, as Pacience seyde · and thus sone this doctour,
As rody as a rose · rubbed his chekes,
Coughed and carped · and Conscience hym herde,
And tolde hym of a trinite · and toward vs he loked.
'What is Dowel? sire doctour,' quod I · 'is Dowel any penaunce?'

'Dowel?' quod this doctour—· and toke the cuppe and dranke—
'Do non yuel to thine euenecrystene · nou3t by thi powere.'
'By this day, sire doctour,' quod I · 'thanne be 3e nou3t in Dowel;
For 3e han harmed vs two · in that 3e eten the puddyng,
Mortrewes, and other mete · and we no morsel hade!
And if 3e fare so in 3owre fermorie · ferly me thinketh,
But chest be there charite shulde be · and 3onge childern dorste pleyne!
I wolde permute my penaunce with 3owre · for I am in poynte to Dowel!'
Thanne Conscience curteisliche · a contenaunce he made,
And preynte vpon Pacience · to preie me to be stille,
And seyde hym-self, 'sire doctour · and it be 3owre wille,
What is Dowel and Dobet? · 3e deuynours knoweth.'

B. 91. blancmangere WCO; blaumanger *or* blanmanger L. 92. ne CROB; no L. 107. morsel WCB; mussel LRO.

'Ich shal Iangly to thys Iordan · with hus Iuste wombe,
And a-pose hym what penaunce is · and purgatorie on erthe,
And whi he lyueth nat as he lereth!' · 'let be,' quath Pacience,
And seide, 'thow shalt seo thus sone · whan he may na more,
He shal haue a penaunce in hus paunche · and puffe at eche worde;
Thenne shulleth his gottes godelen · and he by-gynne to galpe.
Now he hath dronke so depe · he wol deuiny sone,
And preouen it by here Apocalips · and by the passion of seint Aueray,
That nother bacon ne braun · blammanger ne mortreuus
Ys nother fissh ne flessh · bote fode for penauntes;
And take witnesse of the trinite · and take his felawe to wittnesse,
What he fond in a forel · of a freres lyuynge;
And bote the ferste leef be lesynge · leyf me neuere after!
And thenne is tyme to talke · and to apose this doctour
Of Dowel and of Dobet · and yf Dobet do eny penaunce.'
Ich sat stille as Pacience wolde · and thus sone this doctour,
As rody as a rose · roddede hus chekes,
Kowede and carpede · and Conscience hym herde,
And tolde of a trinite · and to-warde me he lokede.
'What is Dowel, sire doctour?' quath ich · 'is Dobet eny penaunce?'
'Dowel?' quath this doctour · and he drank after,
'Do thy neyhebore non harme · ne thy-selue nother,
Thanne dost thow wel and wisliche · ich dar hit wel a-vouwe.'
'Certes, sire,' thanne seide ich · 'hit semeth nat here,
In that ȝe parteth nat with ous poure · that ȝe passeth Dowel,
Nother louyeth as ȝe lereth · as oure lorde wolde,
Et uisitavit et fecit redemptionem plebis sue israel.
And ȝe fare thus with ȝoure sike freres · ferly me thynketh,
Bote Dowel endite ȝow · *in die iudicii*.'
Thenne Conscience ful curteisliche · a contenaunce he made,
And preynte vpon Pacience · to preye me be stille,
And seide hymself, 'syre doctour · by so hit be ȝoure wil,
What is Dowel and Dobet? · ȝe diuynours knoweth.'
'Ich haue seide,' seide the seg · 'y can seye no bettere,

C. 93. what IMETG; wich P. 97. he EM; PIT *om.* 102. is (*for* his) P. 113. thy IEG; the P (*2nd time*). 119. endite IMT; endyty P.

'Dowel,' quod this doctour · 'do as clerkes techeth,
And Dobet is he that techeth · and trauailleth to teche other,
And Dobest doth hym-self so · as he seith and precheth:—
Qui facit et docuerit, magnus vocabitur in regno celorum.'
'Now thow, Clergye,' quod Conscience · 'carpest what is Dowel.'
'I haue seuene sones,' he seyde · 'seruen in a castel,
There the lorde of Lyf wonyeth · to leren hym what is Dowel;
Til I se tho seuene · and my-self acorden,
I am vnhardy,' quod he · 'to any wy3t to preue it.
For one Pieres the Ploughman · hath inpugned vs alle,
And sette alle sciences at a soppe · saue loue one,
And no tixte ne taketh · to meyntene his cause,
But *dilige deum* · and *domine, quis habitabit, &c.*
And seith that Dowel and Dobet · aren two infinites,
Whiche infinites, with a feith · fynden oute Dobest,
Which shal saue mannes soule · thus seith Piers the Ploughman.
'I can nou3t her-on,' quod Conscience · 'ac I knowe wel Pieres;
He wil nou3t a3ein holy writ speken · I dar wel vndertake;
Thanne passe we ouer til Piers come · and preue this in dede.
Pacience hath be in many place · and perauntre cnoweth
That no clerke ne can · as Cryst bereth witnesse;
Pacientes vincunt, &c.'
'At 3owre preyere,' quod Pacyence tho · 'so no man displese hym;
Disce,' quod he, '*doce* · *dilige inimicos.*
Disce, and Dowel · *doce*, and Dobet;
Dilige, and Dobest · thus tau3te me ones
A lemman that I loued · Loue was hir name.
"With wordes and with werkes," quod she · "and wille of thyne herte,
Thow loue lelly thi soule · al thi lyf-tyme;
And so thow lere the to louye · for the lordes loue of heuene,
Thine enemye in al wyse · euene-forth with thi-selue.
Cast coles on his hed · and al kynde speche,
Bothe with werkes and with wordes · fonde his loue to wynne;
And lay on hym thus with loue · til he laughe on the;
And but he bowe for this betyng · blynde mote he worthe!
Ac for to fare thus with thi frende · foly it were,
For he that loueth the lelly · lyte of thyne coueiteth.

B. 136. *In margin of* L—disce, doce, et dilige. 146. laughe C; laghe L.

Bote do as doctours telleth · for Dowel ich hit holde;
That traueileth to teche othere · for Dobet ich it holde;
And he that doth as he techeth · ich halde hit for a Dobest;
Qui facit et docuerit, magnus uocabitur.'
'Now thow, Cleregie,' quath Conscience · 'carpe what is Dowel.'
'Haue me excused,' quath Cleregie · 'by Crist, bote in scole,
Shal no such motif be meued · for me, bote there,
For Peers loue the Plouhman · that enpugnede ones
Alle kyne konnynges · and alle kyne craftes,
Saue loue and leaute · and louhnesse of herte,
And no tixt taketh · to preoue this for trewe
Bote *dilige deum & proximum* · and *domine, quis habitabit in tabernaculo, &c.;*
And preoueth by pure skyle · inparfit alle thynges,
Nemo bonus,
Bote leel loue and treuthe · that loth is to be yfounde.'

Quath Peers the Plouhman · '*pacientes uincunt.*
By-for perpetual pees · ich shal preoue that ich seide,
And a-vowe by-for god · and for-sake hit neuere,
That *disce, doce, dilige* · *deum* and thyn enemye;
Hertely thou hym helpe · emforth thy myȝt,
Cast hote coles on hus hefde · of alle kynde speche,
Fonde thorgh wit and with worde · hus loue for to wynne,
And ȝif hym eft and eft · euere at hus neede;
Conforte hym with thy catel · and with thy kynde speche,
And leye on hym thus with loue · tyl he lauhe on the;
And bote he bowe for this betynge · blynd mote he worthe!'
And whanne he hadde worded thus · wiste no man after,
Where Peers Plouhman by-cam · so priueliche he wente.
And Reson ran after · and ryght with him ȝeode;
Saue Conscience and Cleregie · ich couthe no mo aspye.
And Pacience propreliche spak · tho Peers was thus passed,
'That loueth lelly,' quath he · 'bote lytel thyng coueyteth.

C. 129. me EIMTG; P *om.* 130. meeuede P. 139. preeouye P; *see* l. 136. 143. hote EIMTG; oute P. 146. Conforte EG; Conforty P. 148. he IMTG; ȝe PM (*1st time*). he IT; ich PE (*2nd time*). 149. weste (*for* wiste) P. 151. and IMTG; P *om.*

Kynde loue coueiteth nou3te · no catel but speche,
With half a laumpe lyne in latyne · *ex vi transicionis.*"
I bere there-inne aboute · fast ybounde Dowel,
In a signe of the Saterday · that sette firste the kalendare,
And al the witte of the Wednesday · of the nexte wyke after;
The myddel of the mone · is the mi3te of bothe.
And here-with am I welcome · there I haue it with me.'
'Vndo it, late this doctour deme · if Dowel be therinne;
For, bi hym that me made · mi3te neuere pouerte,
Miseise, ne myschief · ne man with his tonge,
Colde, ne care · ne compaignye of theues,
Ne noither hete, ne haille · ne non helle pouke,
Ne noither fuire ne flode · ne fere of thine enemy
Tene the eny tyme · and thow take it with the;
Caritas nichil timet.
And eek, haue god my soule! · and thow wilt it craue,
There nys neyther emperour ne emperesse · erl, kynge, ne baroun,
Pope, ne patriarch · that puyre reson ne schal make
The meyster of alle tho men · thoru3 mi3t of this redeles;
Nou3t thoru3 wicche-craft, but thoru3 wit · (and thow wilt thi-selue)
Do kynge and quene · and alle the comune after
3yue the alle that thei may 3iue · as for the best 3emere,
And, as thou demest, wil thei do · alle here dayes after;
Pacientes vincunt, &c.'
'It is but a *Dido*,' quod this doctour · 'a dysoures tale.
Al the witt of this worlde · and wi3te mennes strengthe
Can nou3t confourmen a pees · bytwene the pope and his enemys,
Ne bitwene two Cristene kynges · can no wi3te pees make,
Profitable to ayther peple' · and put the table fro hym,
And toke Clergye and Conscience · to conseille, as it were,
That Pacience tho moste passe · for pilgrimes kunne wel lye.
Ac Conscience carped loude · and curteislich seide,
'Frendes, fareth wel' · and faire spake to Clergye,
'For I wil go with this gome · if god wil 3iue me grace,
And be pilgryme with Pacience · til I haue proued more.'
'What?' quod Clergye to Conscience · 'ar 3e coueitouse nouthe
After 3eres3yues or 3iftes · or 3ernen to rede redeles?

B. 164–171. *These lines in* R *only; but cf.* **C**-*text.* 170. for þe; *such is my conjecture*; R *has* þe for.

Ich wolde, and ich will hadde · wynnen al Fraunce
With-oute bruting of burnes · other eny blod-sheding;
Ich take wittnesse,' quath he · 'at holy writ a partie;
Pacientes uincunt.
For, by hym that me made! · myȝte neuere pouerte,
Miseise, ne myschief · ne man with hus tonge
Tene the eny tyme · and thow take Pacience,
And bere hit in thy bosom · abowte wher thou wendest,
In the corner of a cart-whel · with a crowe croune.

Shal neuere burne be abaisshed · that hath this a-boute,
Neither hete ne hail · ne helle pouke hym greue,
Neither fuyr, nother flod · ne be a-fered of enemye;
Caritas expellit omnem timorem;

Ther nis wyght in this worlde · that wolde the lette
To haue alle londes at thy lykyng · and the here lord make,
And maister of alle here meeble · and of here moneye after,
The kynge and alle the comune · and cleregie to the aloute
As for here lorde and ledere · and lyuen as thou techest.'

'This is a *Dido*,' quath this doctour · 'a disours tale!
Al the witt of this worlde · ne wyghte mennes strengthe
Can nat performen a pees · of the pope and of hus enemys

Profitable for bothe parties'— · and put the bord fram hym,
And tok Conscience and Cleregie · to counsel, as hit were.

C. 155. adde P. 162. *From* IMETS; P *om. this line.* 171. *Dido* MT; *Dydo* S; *dico* P. 172. wordle P.

I shal brynge ȝow a bible · a boke of the olde lawe,
And lere ȝow, if ȝow lyke · the leest poynte to knowe,
That Pacience the pilgryme · perfitly knewe neuere.'
'Nay, bi Cryste,' quod Conscience to Clergye · 'god the forȝelde,
For al that Pacience me profreth · proude am I litel.
Ac the wille of the wye · and the wille of folke here
Hath moeued my mode · to mourne for my synnes.
The good wille of a wiȝte · was neure bouȝte to the fulle;
For there nys no tresore therto · to a trewe wille.
Haued nouȝt Magdeleigne more · for a boxe of salue,
Than Zacheus for he seide · *dimidium bonorum meorum do pauperibus?*
And the pore widwe · for a peire of mytes,
Than alle tho that offreden · in-to *gazafilacium?*'
Thus curteislich Conscience · congeyde fyrst the frere,
And sithen softliche he seyde · in Clergyes ere,
'Me were leuer, by owre lorde · and I lyue shulde,
Haue pacience perfitlich · than half thy pakke of bokes!'
Clergye to Conscience · no congeye wolde take,
But seide ful sobreliche · 'thow shalt se the tyme,
Whan thow art wery for-walked · wilne me to consaille.'
'That is soth,' seyde Conscience · 'so me god helpe!
If Pacience be owre partyng felawe · and pryue with vs bothe,
There nys wo in this worlde · that we ne shulde amende,
And confourmen kynges to pees · and al kynnes londes,
Sarasenes and Surre · and so forth alle the Iewes
Turne in-to the trewe feithe · and in-til one byleue.'
'That is soth,' quod Clergye · 'I se what thow menest,
I shal dwelle as I do · my deuore to shewen,
And conformen fauntekynes · and other folke ylered,
Tyl Pacience haue preued the · and parfite the maked.'
Conscience tho with Pacience passed · pilgrymes as it were.
Thanne had Pacience, as pylgrymes han · in his poke vittailles,
Sobrete, and symple-speche · and sothfaste-byleue,
To conforte hym and Conscience · if they come in place
There Vnkyndenesse and Coueytise is · hungrye contrees bothe.
And as thei went by the weye · of Dowel thei carped;
Thei mette with a mynstral · as me tho thouȝte.

B. 190. of WO; LCRB *om.* (*2nd time*).

Ac ich took kepe how Conscience · congede sone this doctour,
And sitthe he seide to Cleregie · so that ich hit herde,
'By Cryst,' quath Conscience · 'Cleregie, ich wol nat lye,
Me were leuere, by oure lorde · and ich lyuye sholde,
Haue pacience parfitliche · than half thy pack of bokes!
Lettrure and longe studie · letteth ful menye,
That thei knoweth nat,' quath Conscience · 'what is kynde Pacience.
For-thi,' quath Conscience · 'Crist ich the by-teche,
With Pacience wol ich passe · parfitnesse to fynde.'

Thus thei wente forth here way · with gret wil ich folewede.
Thenne hadde Pacience, as pilgrimes hauen · in here poke vitailes,
Sobrete and symple-speche · and sothfast-byleyue,
To comforty hym and Conscience · yf thei come in place
Ther Vnkyndnesse and Couetyse ys · hongry contreis bothe.
And as thei wente by the wey · of Dowel gan thei carpe;
Thei mette with a mynstral · as me tho thouhte.

C. 176. congede SG; conged T; conueide P. 184. Whit (*for* With) P.

Pacience apposed hym fyrste · and preyed hym he sholde hem telle
To Conscience, what crafte he couthe · an to what contree he wolde.
'I am a mynstral,' quod that man · 'my name is *Actiua-vita:*
Alle ydel ich hatye · for of actyf is my name.
A wafrere, wil ȝe wite · and serue many lordes,
And fewe robes I fonge · or furred gounes.
Couthe I lye to do men laughe · thanne lacchen I shulde
Other mantel or money · amonges lordes mynstralles.
Ac for I can noither tabre ne trompe · ne telle none gestes,
Farten, ne fythelen · at festes, ne harpen,
Iape ne Iogly · ne gentlych pype,
Ne noyther sailly ne saute · ne synge with the gyterne,
I haue none gode gyftes · of thise grete lordes,
For no bred that I brynge forth · saue a beneson on the Sonday,
Whan the prest preyeth the peple · her *pater-noster* to bidde
For Peres the Plowman · and that hym profite wayten.
And that am I, Actyf · that ydelnesse hatye,
For alle trewe trauaillours · and tilieres of the erthe;
Fro Mychelmesse to Mychelmesse · I fynde hem with wafres.
Beggeres and bidderes · of my bred crauen,
Faitoures and freres · and folke with brode crounes.
I fynde payne for the pope · and prouendre for his palfrey,
And I hadde neuere of hym · haue god my treuthe,
Noither prouendre ne parsonage · ȝut of the popis ȝifte,
Saue a pardoun with a peys of led · and two pollis amydde!
Hadde iche a clerke that couthe write · I wolde caste hym a bille,
That he sent me vnder his seel · a salue for the pestilence,
And that his blessyng and his bulles · bocches miȝte destroye:
In nomine meo demonia eicient, et super egros manus imponent, et bene habebunt.
And thanne wolde I be prest to the peple · paste for to make,
And buxome and busy · aboute bred and drynke
For hym and for alle his · fonde I that his pardoun
Miȝte lechen a man · as I beleue it shulde.
For sith he hath the powere · that Peter hym-self hadde,

B. 249. *eicient* WCROB; *eiciunt* L. 250. þe WCROB; L *om.*

Pacience a-posed hym · and preide he sholde telle
What craft that he couthe · and cortesly he seide,
'Ich am a mynstral,' quath this man · 'my name is *Activa-uita*,
Peers prentys the Plouhman · alle peuple to comfortye.'
'What manere mynstralcie · my dere frend,' quath Conscience,
'Hast thow vsed other haunted · al thy lyf-tyme?'
'Mynstralcie can ich nat muche · bote make men murye,
As a waffrer with waffres · and welcome godes gistes.
Of my labour thei lauhe · the lasse and the more.
The poure and the riche · y plese and payn fynde,
And fewe robis ich fonge · other forrede gounes.
Wolde ich lye and do men lauhe · thenne lacchen ich sholde
Mantels other moneye · a-mong lordes minstrales.
Ich can nat tabre ne trompe · ne telle faire gestes,
Farten, ne fithelen · at festes, ne harpen,
Iapen ne Iogelen · ne gentelliche pipe,
Nother sailen ne sautrien · ne singe with the giterne.
Ich haue none gode gyftes · of these grete lordes
For no bred that ich by-trauaile · to bryng by-fore lordes.
Ne were hit that the parishe · prayeth for me on Sonedayes,
Ich am sory that ich sew other sette · bote for my-self one.
Ac the prest and other peuple · prayeth for Peers Plouhman,
And for me, Actyf, hus man · that ydelnesse hate.
For lordes and lorelles · luthere and goode,
Fro Myhel-masse to Myhel-masse · ich fynde mete and drynke.
Ich fynde payn for the pope · and praye hym ich wolde
That pestilences to pees · and to parfit loue turne.
For founde ich that hus blessing · and hus bulle myghte
Letten this luther eir · and lechen the syke—
As the booke bereth wittnesse · that he bere myghte
In hus mouth mercy · and amende vs alle,
Super egros manus imponent, et bene se habebunt—
Thenne wolde ich bee busy · and buxum to helpe
Eche kynne creature · that on Cryst by-leyueth.
For sutthe he hath the power · that seynt Peter hadde,

C. 194. thees (*for* this) P. 199. wolcome P. gistes EMFS; gustes P. 206. fithelen IST; fithelyn P. 207. Iogelyn P. 209. goude (*for* gode) P. 210. bytrauaily P. 211. parishe I; parissh T; parshe P. 212. sew MS; sewe P. 215. goude (*for* goode) P. 220. lechin P. 221. booke I; boke S; book T; bookes P.

He hath the potte with the salue · sothly, as me thinketh :
Argentum et aurum non est mihi; quod autem habeo, hoc tibi do; in nomine domini, surge et ambula.
Ac if miȝte of miracle hym faille · it is for men ben nouȝt worthy
To haue the grace of god · and no gylte of the pope.
For may no blyssyng done vs bote · but if we wil amende,
Ne mannes masse make pees · amonges Cristene peple,
Tyl pruyde be purelich fordo · and that thourgh payn defaute.
For ar I haue bred of mele · ofte mote I swete.
And ar the comune haue corne ynough · many a colde mornynge;
So, ar my wafres ben ywrouȝt · moche wo I tholye.
Alle Londoun I leue · liketh wel my wafres,
And lowren whan thei lakken hem— · it is nouȝt longe ypassed,
There was a carful comune · whan no carte come to toune
With bake bred fro Stretforth · tho gan beggeres wepe,
And werkmen were agaste a litel · this wil be thouȝte longe.
In the date of owre dryȝte · in a drye Apprile,
A thousande and thre hondreth · tweis thretty and ten,
My wafres there were gesen · whan Chichestre was maire.'
I toke gode kepe, by Cryst · and Conscience bothe,
Of Haukyn the actyf man · and how he was y-clothed.
He hadde a cote of Crystendome · as holykirke bileueth,
Ac it was moled in many places · with many sondri plottes,
Of Pruyde here a plotte, and there a plotte · of vnboxome speche,
Of scornyng and of scoffyng · and of vnskilful berynge,
As in aparaille and in porte · proude amonges the peple,
Otherwyse than he hath · with herte or syȝte shewynge;
Hym willynge that alle men wende · he were that he is nouȝte.
For-why he bosteth and braggeth · with many bolde othes,
And in-obedient to ben vndernome · of any lyf lyuynge,
And so syngulere by hym-self · as to syȝte of the poeple,
Was none suche as hym-self · ne none so pope-holy,
Y-habited as an hermyte · an ordre by hym-selue,
Religioun sanz reule · and resonable obedience;
Lakkyng lettred men · and lewed men bothe,

B. 255. *hoc* RO; LCWB *om.* 265. hem WR; it LO. 267. bake R; LWCOB *om.* (*but it improves the line*). 284. pope R; pompe L.

He hath pureliche the pot · with the same salue;
Argentum et aurum non est michi; quod autem habeo, hoc tibi do, etc.
Ac yf myghte of miracle hym faile · hit is for men beeth nat worthi
For to haue the grace of god · and no gult in the pope.
For may no blessynge do vs bote · bote yf we wol amende,
Ne mannes preier make pees · among Cristine peuple,
Til prude be pureliche for-do · and that thorw payn defaute;
Ex habundantia panis et uini turpissimum peccatum aduenit.
Pure plente of payn · the peuple of Sodomye,
And reste and riche metes · rybaudes hem made.'

[*Continued on* p. 415; *compare* l. 232 *above with* l. 75 on p. 418.]

From C. vii. 30–40.

[Prout of aparail · in porte amonge the puple
Other-wise than ich haue · with-ynne other with-oute,
Me wilnynge that men wende · ich were, as in aueyr,
Riche, and resonable · and ryghtful of lyuynge,
Bostynge and braggynge · wyth meny bolde othes,
Auauntyng vp-on my veine glorie · for eny vndernymynge;
And ȝut so synguler by my-self · as to sight of the puple,
Was non suche as my-self · ne non so pope-holy,
Som tyme in on secte · som tyme in another;
In alle kynne couetyse · contreuede how ich myghte
Be holde for holy · an hondred sithe, by that encheison;

C. 228. good (*for* god) P. 230. preier F; preiere ME; preir P.

In lykyng of lele lyf · and a lyer in soule;
With inwit and with outwitt · ymagenen and studye,
As best for his body be · to haue a badde name,
And entermeten hym ouer-al · ther he hath nou3t to done,
Wilnyng that men wende · his witte were the best,
Or for his crafty kunnynge · or of clerkes the wisest,
Or strengest on stede · or styuest vnder gurdel,
And louelokest to loken on · and lelest of werkes,
And non so holy as he · ne of lif clennere,
Or feyrest of feytures · of fourme and of schafte,
And most sotyl of songe · other sleyest of hondes,
And large to lene · losse there-by to cacche;
And if he gyueth ou3te pore gomes · telle what he deleth;
Pore of possessioun · in purse and in coffre,
And as a lyon on to loke · and lordeliche of speche.
Baldest of beggeres · a bostour that nou3t hath,
In towne and in tauernes · tales to telle,
And segge thinge that he neuere seigh · and for soth sweren it;
Of dedes that he neuere dyd · demen and bosten,
And of werkes that he wel dyd · witnesse and seggen—
'Lo! if 3e leue me nou3t · or that I lye wenen,
Axeth at hym or at hym · and he 3ow can telle,
What I suffred and seighe · and some tymes hadde,
And what I couth and knewe · and what kynne I come of.'
Al he wolde that men wiste · of werkes and of wordes,
Which my3te plese the peple · and praysen hymseluen:
Si hominibus placerem, Christi seruus non essem;
Et alibi: nemo potest duobus dominis seruire.
'Bi Criste,' quod Conscience tho · 'thi best cote, Haukyn,
Hath many moles and spottes · it moste ben ywasshe.'
'3e, who so toke hede,' quod Haukyn · 'byhynde and bifore,
What on bakke and what on bodyhalf · and by the two sydes,
Men sholde fynde many frounces · and many foule plottes.'
And he torned hym as tyte · and thanne toke I hede,
It was fouler by felefolde · than it firste semed.
It was bidropped with Wratthe · and wikked wille,
With Enuye and yuel speche · entysyng to fy3te,

B. 293–299. *These lines in* R *only; yet found in the* C-text *in a different part of the poem; see* p. 405, ll. 42–46.

Wilnede that men wende · my werkes were the beste,
And konnyngest of my craft · clerkes other othere,
And strengest vp-on stede · and styuest vnder gurdell,
And louelokest to loken on · and lykyngest a bedde;
And lykynge of such a lif · that no lawe preyseth,
Prout of my faire fetours · and for ich songe shulle.
And what ich gaf for godes loue · to god-sybbes ich tolde,
Thei to wene that ich were · wel holy and wel almesful,
And non so bold beggere · to bydden and craue;
Tales to telle · in tauernes and in stretes,
From C. vii. 41–60. Thyng thut neuere was thouht · and ȝut ich swor ich sauh hit,
And lyed on my lykame · and on my lyf bothe.
Of werkes that ich wel dude · wittnesse ich take,
And sygge to suche · that sytten me by-syde,
'Lo, yf ȝe leyue me nouht · other than ȝe wene ich lye,
Aske of hym other of hure · and thei conne ȝow telle
What ich soffrede and seih · and som tyme hadde,
And what ich knew and couthe · and what kyn ich kam of;' —
Al ich wolde that men wuste · when hit to pruyde sounede,
As to be preised a-mong the puple · thauh ich poure semede:
Si hominibus placerem, Christi seruus non essem.
Nemo potest duobus dominis seruire.']

Lyinge and laughynge · and leue tonge to chyde;
Al that he wist wykked · by any wi3te, tellen it,
And blame men bihynde her bakke · and bydden hem mes-
chaunce;
And that he wist bi Wille · tellen it Watte,
And that Watte wiste · Wille wiste it after,
And made of frendes foes · thorugh a false tonge,
'Or with my3te of mouthe · or thorugh mannes strengthe
Auenge me fele tymes · other frete my-selue
Wyth-inne, as a shepster shere;' — · i-shrewed men and cursed!
Cuius maledicione os plenum est, et amaritudine; sub lingua eius labor et dolor:
Et alibi: filij hominum, dentes eorum arma et sagitte, et lingua eorum gladius acutus:—
'There is no lyf that I louye · lastyng any while,
For tales that I telle · no man trusteth to me,
And whan I may nou3t haue the maistrye · with malencolye I
take,
That I cacche the crompe · the cardiacle some tyme,
Or an ague in suche an angre · and some tyme a feure,
That taketh me al a twelf-moneth · tyl that I despyse
Lechecrafte of owre lorde · and leue on a wicche,
And segge, that no clerke ne can · ne Cryste, as I leue,
To the souter of Southwerke · or of Shordyche dame Emme!
And segge, that no goddes worde · gaf me neuere bote,
But thorw a charme had I chaunce · and my chief hele!'
I wayted wisloker · and thanne was it soiled
With lykyng of Lecherye · as by lokyng of his eye.
For vche a mayde that he mette · he made hir a signe
Semynge to-synne-ward · and some tyme he gan taste
Aboute the mouth, or bynethe · bygynneth to grope,
Tyl eytheres wille waxeth kene · and to the werke 3eden,
As wel in fastyng-days and Frydayes · and forboden ny3tes;
And as wel in Lente as oute of Lente · alle tymes ylyche,
Suche werkes with hem · were neuere oute of sesoun;
Tyl thei my3te namore . and thanne had merye tales,
And how that lechoures louyen · lau3en and iapen,
And of her harlotrye and horedome · in her elde tellen.

B. 338. of WCOB; or LR. 351. were WRCB; was L. 353. an L.

[And blame men by-hynde hure bak · and bidde hem mes-
chaunce.
Al that he wiste by Wylle · to Watkyn he told hit,
And that he wiste by Watkyn · tolde hit Wille after;
And made foos of frendes · thorw fals and fykel tonge:
'Other thorw myghte of mouthe · other thorw meny sleyghthes
Venged me fele tymes · other brend my-self with-ynne
Lyke a shappesters sheres · and shrewede myn emcristyne,
Ayens the consail of Crist · as clerkes fynden in bokes:
Cuius maledictione os plenum est et amaritudine et dolo:
sub lingua eius labor et dolor.
Filij hominum, dentes eorum arma et sagitte, et lingua
eorum gladius acutus.
Whenne ich ne may haue the maistrie · suche malancolie ich take,
That ich cacche the crampe · the cardiacle som tyme,
Other an ague in suche an angre · and som tyme a feuere,
That taketh me al a twelfmonthe · til that ich dispice
Leche-craft of oure lorde · and leyue on a wicche,
And sigge that no clerk can · ne Crist, as ich leyue,
To the souter of South-werk · such is hus grace.
For god, ne godes wordes · ne grace ne halp neuere,
Bote thorw a charme hadde ich a chaunce · and my chief hele.]

From C. vii. 69–85.

[Ich, gulty in gost · to god ich me shryue
As in lykynge of lecherie · my licames gultes,
In wordes, in wedes · in waitynge of eyen.
To eche maide that ich mette · ich made hure a syġne
Semynge to synne-warde · and somme gan ich taste
A-boute the mouthe, and by-nythe · by-gan ich to grope,
Til oure bothers wil was on; · to werke we ȝeden
As wel fastyngdaies as Frydaies · and heye-feste euenes,
As luf in lente as oute of lente · alle tymes liche—
Suche werkus with ous · were neuere out of seson—
Til we myghte no more; · thanne hadde we murye tales
Of puterie and of paramours · and proueden thorw speches,
Handlynge and halsynge · and al-so thorw cussynge
Excitynge oure aither other · til oure olde synne.]

From C. vii. 175–188.

Thanne Pacience parceyued · of poyntes of his cote,
Was colmy thorw Coueityse · and vnkynde desyrynge;
More to good than to god · the gome his loue caste,
And ymagyned how · he it myȝte haue
With false mesures and mette · and with false witnesse;
Lened for loue of the wedde · and loth to do treuthe,
And awaited thorwgh which · wey to bigile,
And menged his marchaundyse · and made a gode moustre;—
'The worste with-in was · a gret witte I lete hit,
And if my neighbore had any hyne · or any beste elles,
More profitable than myne · many sleightes I made,
How I myȝte haue it · al my witte I caste,
And but I it had by other waye · atte laste I stale it,
Or pryuiliche his purse shoke · vnpiked his lokkes,
Or by nyȝt or by day · aboute was ich euere,
Thorwgh gyle to gadren · the good that ich haue.
ȝif I ȝede to the plow · I pynched so narwe,
That a fote-londe or a forwe · fecchen I wolde,
Of my nexte neighbore · nymen of his erthe;
And if I rope, ouer-reche · or ȝaf hem red that ropen,
To seise to me with her sykel · that I ne sewe neure.
And who so borwed of me · aboughte the tyme,
With presentes priueliche · or payed somme certeyne.
So, walde he or nouȝt wolde he · wynnen I wolde;
And bothe to kyth and to kyn · vnkynde of that ich hadde.
And who so cheped my chaffare · chiden I wolde,
But he profred to paye · a peny or tweyne
More than it was worth · and ȝet wolde I swere,
That it coste me moche more · swore manye othes.
In halydayes at holicherche · whan ich herde masse,
Hadde I neuere wille, wot god · witterly to biseche
Mercye for my mysdedes · that I ne morned more
For losse of gode, leue me · than for my lykames giltes;
As, if I had dedly synne done · I dred nouȝt that so sore,
As when I lened and leued it lost · or longe ar it were payed.
So if I kydde any kyndenesse · myn euen-cristene to helpe,
Vpon a cruel coueityse · myn herte gan hange.

B. 355. LR *om. 2nd* of. 356. vkynde L. 374. I WCOB; L *om.* 376. borwed WR; borweth LCOB. aboute LR; aboughte WOB. 385. I WCOB; LR *om.*

[With false wordes and wittes · ich haue wonne my goodes,
And with gyle and glosynge · gadered that ich haue,
Meddled my marchaundise · and mad a good moustre ;
The werst lay with-ynne · a gret wit ich let hit.
And yf my neyhȝebore hadde an hyne · other eny best ellys
More profitable than myn · ich made meny wentes,
How ich myght haue hit · al my wit ich caste.
And bote ich hadde hit by other wey · atte laste ich stal hit,
Other pryuyliche hus pors shok · vnpiked hus lokes.
From C. vii. 258–277. And yf ich ȝede to the plouh · ich pynchede on hus half-acre,
That a fot-londe other a forwe · fecchen ich wolde,
Of my neyhȝeboris next · nymen of hus erthe.
And yf y repe, ouere-reche · other ȝaf hem red that repen
To sese to me with here sykel · that ich sew neuere.
In halydayes at holy churche · whenne ich hurde messe,
Ich hadde neuere wil witerlich · to by-seche mercy
For my mysdedes · that ich ne mornede ofter
For lost of good, leyue me · then for lycames gultes.
Thauh ich dedliche synne dude · ich dradde hit nat so sore
As whenne ich lenede and leyuede hit lost · other longe er hit were paied.

And if I sent ouer see · my seruauntz to Bruges,
Or in-to Pruslonde my prentys · my profit to wayten,
To marchaunden with monoye · and maken her eschaunges,
Miȝte neuere me conforte · in the mene tyme,
Noither messe ne matynes · ne none manere siȝtes,
Ne neuere penaunce perfourned · ne *pater-noster* seyde,
That my mynde ne was more · on my gode, in a doute,
Than in the grace of god · and his grete helpes:
Vbi thesaurus tuus, ibi et cor tuum.'
ȝet the Glotoun with grete othes · his garnement hadde soyled,
And foule be-flobered it · as with fals speche;
There no nede ne was · tok godes name an idel,
Swore there-by swithe ofte · and al by-swatte his cote.
And more mete ete and dronke · then kende miȝt defie—
'And kauȝte seknesse sum-tyme · for my sorfetes ofte;
And thanne I dradde to deye · in dedlich synne'—
That in-to wanhope he worthe · and wende nauȝt to be saued,
The whiche is Sleuthe so slow · that may no slithes helpe it,
Ne no mercy amenden · the man that so deyeth.
Which ben the braunches · that bryngeth a man to Sleuth?
Is, whanne a man morneth nouȝte for his mysdedes · ne maketh no sorwe,
Ac penaunce that the prest enioigneth · perfourneth yuel,
Doth none almes-dede · dret hym of no synne,
Lyueth aȝein the bileue · and no lawe holdeth;
Vch day is haliday with hym · or an heigh ferye;
And if he auȝte wole here · it is an harlotes tonge.
Whan men carpeth of Cryst · or of clennesse of soule,
He wexeth wroth and wil nouȝte here · but wordes of myrthe.
Penaunce and pore men · and the passioun of seyntes
He hateth to here there-of · and alle that it telleth.
Thise ben the braunches, beth war · that bryngeth a man to wanhope!
ȝe lordes and ladyes · and legates of holicherche,
That fedeth foles sages · flatereres and lyeres,
And han likynge to lythen hem · to do ȝow to lawghe;
Ve vobis qui ridetis, etc.:
And ȝiueth hem mete and mede · and pore men refuse,

B. 400–409. *In* R *only, and the text is corrupt.* 400. the *must be inserted*; R *om.* garnement = garment, *miswritten* granement R. 402. tok *must be*

From C. vii. 278–285.

And yf ich sente ouer see · my seruaunt to Brugges,
Other in-to Prus my prentys · my profit to a-waite,
To marchaunde with monye · and maken here eschaunge,
Myghte neuere man comforty me · in the meyn tyme,
Neither matyns ne masse · ne othere manere syghtes,
And neuere penaunse performede · ne *pater-noster* seyde,
That my mynde ne was · more in my goodes
Than in godes grace · and hus grete myghte.
Ubi thesaurus tuus, ibi et cor tuum.']

From C. vii. 425–433.

[To the, god, ich Gloton · gulty me ȝelde
Of my trespas with tunge · ich can nauht telle how ofte,
Sworen 'thy saule and thy sydes' · and 'so help me, god almyghty!'
When that no ned was · meny tyme falsliche.
And ouer-sopede at my soper · and som tyme at nones
More than my kynde · myghte wel defye;
And as an hounde that et gras · so gan ich to brake,
And spilde that ich spele myghte · ich can nouht speke for shame
The vylenye of my foule mouthe · and of my foule mawe.]

From C. viii. 70–85.

[Ac whiche be the braunches · that bryngeth men to sleuthe?
Ys, whanne a man mourneth nat · for hus mysdedes;
The penaunce that the prest enioyneth 'parfourneth vuele,
Doth non almys-dedes · and drat nat of synne,
Lyueth aȝens the by-leyue · and no lawe kepeth,
And hath no lykynge to lerne · ne of oure lord hure,
Bote harlotrie other horedom · other elles of som wynnyng.
Whan men carpen of Cryst 'other of clennesse of soule,
He wext wroth, and wol nat huyre · bote wordes of murthe.
Penaunce and poure men · and the passion of seyntes,
He hateth to huyre ther-of · and alle that ther-of carpen.
Thuse beth the braunches, be war · that bryngeth man to wanhope.
ȝe lordes and ladyes · and legates of holy churche,
That feden fool sages · flaterers and lyers,
And han lykynge to lythen hem · in hope to do ȝow lawghe:
Ve uobis qui ridetis, quia lugebitis, et cetera:
And ȝeueth suche mede and mete · and poure men refusen,

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inserted; R *om.* 407. worthe; *miswritten* wrathe R. 411. Is whanne a man O; LRC *have the extraordinary false reading* His woman; *see* C-text.

In ȝowre deth-deyinge · I drede me ful sore,
Lest tho thre maner men · to moche sorwe ȝow brynge:
Consencientes et agentes pari pena punientur.
Patriarkes and prophetes · and prechoures of goddes wordes
Sauen thorw her sarmoun · mannes soule fram helle;
Riȝt so flatereres and foles · aren the fendes disciples,
To entice men thorw her tales · to synne and harlotrye.
Ac clerkes that knowen holywryt · shulde kenne lordes,
What Dauid seith of suche men · as the sauter telleth:
Non habitabit in medio domus mee, qui facit superbiam et qui loquitur iniqua:
Shulde none harlote haue audience · in halle ne in chambres,
There wise men were · witnesseth goddes wordes;
Ne no mysproude man · amonges lordes ben allowed.
Clerkes and kniȝtes · welcometh kynges ministrales,
And for loue of the lorde · litheth hem at festes;
Muche more, me thenketh · riche men schulde
Haue beggeres byfore hem · the whiche ben goddes ministrales,
As he seyth hym-self · seynt Iohan bereth witnesse:
Qui vos spernit, me spernit.
For-thi I rede ȝow riche · reueles whan ȝe maketh
For to solace ȝoure soules · suche ministrales to haue;
The pore, for a fol sage · syttynge at the heyȝ table,
And a lered man, to lere the · what oure lorde suffred,
For to saue thi soule · fram Sathan thin enemy,
And fithel the, with-out flaterynge · of gode Friday the storye;
And a blynd man for a bourdeoure · or a bedrede womman,
To crie a largesse by-for oure lorde · ȝoure gode loos to schewe!
Thise thre maner ministrales · maketh a man to lawhe,
And, in his deth-deyinge · thei don him grete comforte,
That bi his lyue lythed hem · and loued hem to here.
Thise solaseth the soule · til hym-selue be-falle
In a wel gode hope, for he wrouȝte so · amonges worthi seyntes.
Ac flatereres and foles · thorw her foule wordes,
Leden tho that louen hem · to Luciferes feste,
With *turpiloquio*, a lay of sorwe · and Luciferes fithele.
Thus Haukyn the actyf man · hadde ysoiled his cote,
Til Conscience acouped hym there-of · in a curteise manere,
Whi he ne hadde wasshen it · or wyped it with a brusshe.

In ȝoure deth-deynge · ich drede me sore
Lest tho manere men · to moche sorwe ȝow brynge;
As god wole; *Consencientes et agentes pari pena punientur.*
Patriarkes and prophetes · prechours of godes wordes
Sauen thorgh here sermons · mannes soule fro helle;
Ryȝt so flaterers and foles · aren the fendes procuratores,
Entysen men thorgh here tales · to synne and to harlotrie.
Clerkus that knowen this · sholde kenne lordes,
What Dauid seide of suche men · as the sauter telleth,
Non habitabit in medio domus mee qui facit superbiam, qui loquitur iniqua.
Sholde non harlot haue audience · in halle ne in chaumbre,
Ther that wise men were; · (witnesse of godes wordes),
Nother a mys-proud man · among lordes be a-lowed.
Clerkus and knyȝtes · welcometh kynges mynstrales,
And for loue of here lordes · lithen hem at festes;
Muche more, me thenketh · riche men auhte
From C. viii. 86–118. Haue beggers by-fore hem · whiche beth godes mynstrales,
As he seith hym-self · seynt Iohan bereth witnesse,
Qui uos spernit, me eciam spernit.
Ther-for ich rede ȝow riche · reueles when ȝe maken
For to solace ȝoure soules · suche mynstrales to haue;
The poure for a fol sage · syttynge at thy table,
With a lered man, to lere the · what oure lord suffrede
For to sauy thy saule · fram Satan thyn enemye,
And fithele the, with-oute flateryng · of goode Fryday the geste,
And a blynde man for a bordiour · other a bedreden womman,
To crye a largesse by-fore oure lorde · ȝoure goode loos to shewe.
Thuse thre manere mynstrales · maken a man to lauhe;
In hus deth-deynge · thei don hym gret comfort,
That by hus lyue litheth hem · and loueth hem to huyre.
Thuse solaceth the soule · til hym-self be-falle
In a wel good hope, for he wroghte so · a-mong worthy seyntes;
Ther flaterers and foles · with here foule wordes
Leden tho that lithen hem · to Luciferes feste,
With *turpiloquio*, a lay of sorwe · and Lucifers fithele,
To perpetual peyne · other purgatorye as wykke.]

B. 430. flateres L. 437–454. *These lines in* R *only*; *but found in* C-text. 454. gode; R *om.* for—so; R *om; but cf.* C-text. 455. flateres (*for* flatereres) LR.

PASSUS XIV (DO-WEL VI).

Passus xiiij^us^.

'I HAUE but one hool hatere,' quod Haukyn · 'I am the lasse to blame
Though it be soiled and selde clene · I slepe there-inne on niȝtes;
And also I haue an houswyf · hewen and children—
Vxorem duxy, et ideo non possum venire—
That wolen bymolen it many tyme · maugre my chekes!
It hath ben laued in lente · and oute of lente bothe,
With the sope of sykenesse · that seketh wonder depe,
And with the losse of catel · loth forto agulte
God or any gode man · bi auȝte that I wiste;
And was shryuen of the preste · that gaue me, for my synnes,
To penaunce pacyence · and pore men to fede,
Al for coueitise of my Crystenedome · in clennesse to kepen it.
And couthe I neuere, by Cryste · kepen it clene an houre,
That I ne soiled it with syȝte · or sum ydel speche,
Or thorugh werke or thorugh worde · or wille of myn herte,
That I ne flober it foule · fro morwe tyl eue.'
'And I shal kenne the,' quod Conscience · 'of contricioun to make,
That shal clawe thi cote · of alkynnes filthe,
Cordis contricio, etc.: —
Dowel shal wasshen it and wryngen it · thorw a wys confessour,
Oris confessio, etc.:—
Dobet shal beten it and bouken it · as briȝte as any scarlet,
And engreynen it with good wille · and goddes grace to amende the,
And sithen sende the to satisfaccioun · for to sowen it after,
Satisfaccio dobest.
Shal neuere myste bimolen it · ne moth after biten it,
Ne fende ne false man · defoulen it in thi lyue;
Shall none heraude ne harpoure · haue a fairere garnement
Than Haukyn the actyf man · and thou do by my techyng;
Ne no mynstral be more worth · amonges pore and riche,
Than Haukynnes wyf the wafrere · with his *actiua-vita*.'

B. 1. hool WCOB; LR *om.* 18. shal W; schal O; LCRB *om.*

'Pees!' quath Pacience · 'ich praye the, syre Actyf!
For thauh neuere payn ne plough · ne potage were,

'And I shal purueye the paste,' quod Pacyence · 'though no plow erie,
And floure to fede folke with · as best be for the soule,
Though neuere greyne growed · ne grape vppon vyne.
Alle that lyueth and loketh · lyflode woldę I fynde,
And that ynough shal none faille · of thinge that hem nedeth.
We shulde nouȝt be to busy · a-bouten owre lyflode,
Ne solliciti sitis, etc.: volucres celi deus pascit, etc.: pacientes vincunt, etc.'
Thanne laughed Haukyn a litel · and liȝtly gan swerye,
'Who so leueth ȝow, by owre lorde · I leue nouȝte he be blissed!'
'No,' quod Pacyence paciently · and out of his poke hente
Vitailles of grete vertues · for al manere bestes,
And seyde, 'lo! here lyflode ynough · if owre byleue be trewe!
For lente neuere was lyf · but lyflode were shapen,
Wher-of or wherfore · or where-by to lybbe.
Firste the wylde worme · vnder weet erthe,
Fissch to lyue in the flode · and in the fyre the crykat,
The corlue by kynde of the eyre · moste clennest flessch of bryddes,
And bestes by grasse and by greyne · and by grene rotis,
In menynge that alle men · myȝte the same
Lyue thorw lele byleuę · and loue, as god witnesseth;
Quodcumque pecieritis a patre in nomine meo, etc.: et alibi,
Non in solo pane viuit homo, set in omni verbo, quod procedit de ore dei.'
But I loked what lyflode it was · that Pacience so preysed,
And thanne was it a pece of the *pater-noster* · *fiat voluntas tua.*
'Haue, Haukyn!' quod Pacyence · 'and ete this whan the hungreth,
Or whan thow clomsest for colde · or clyngest for drye.
Shal neuere gyues the greue · ne grete lordes wrath,
Prisone ne peyne · for—*pacientes vincunt.*
Bi so that thow be sobre · of syȝte and of tonge,
In etynge and in handlynge · and in alle thi fyue wittis,
Darstow neuere care for corne · ne lynnen cloth ne wollen,
Ne for drynke, ne deth drede · but deye as god lyketh,
Or thorw honger or thorw hete · at his wille be it;

Prude wolde putte hym-self forth · thauh no plouh erye.
Hit am ich that fynde alle folke · and fram hunger saue,
Thorgh the heye helpe of hym · that me hyder sente,

And seide, 'lo, here lyf-lode ynowe · yf oure by-leyue be trewe.
For lent was ther neuere lyf · bote lyflode were yshape,
Wher-of othere wherfore · and wher-with to lyuen.
The worme that woneth vnder erthe · and in water fisshes,
The crykett by kynde of fur · and corlew by the wynde,
Bestes by gras and by greyn · and by grene rotes.
In menynge that alle men · myghte the same
Lyuen thorgh leell by-leyue · as oure lord wittnesseth,

Quodcunque petieritis patrem in nomine meo, dabitur enim uobis; et alibi:

Non in solo pane uiuit homo, sed de omni verbo, quod procedit de ore dei.'

'Hast thow ay,' quath Actyf · 'suche mete with the?'
'3e,' quath Pacience, and hente · out of hus poke
A pece of the pater-noster · and profrede to vs alle.
And ich lustnede, and lokede · what lyflode hit were;
Thanne was hit *fiat-uoluntas-tua* · that sholde fynde vs alle.
'Haue, Actyf,' quath Pacience · 'and eet this when the hungreth,
Other whenne thow clomsest for colde · other clyngest for drouthe;
And shal neuere gyues the greue · ne grete lordes wratthe,
Pryson ne other payne · for—*pacientes uincunt;*
By so thow be sobre · of syght, and of tounge bothe,
In ondyng, in handlying · in alle thy fyue wittes,
That thow care for no corn · for cloth ne for drynke,
Ne deth drede, ne deuel · deye as god lyketh,
Whether thorw hunger other thorw hete · at hus wil be hit!

C. 244. greyen (*for* greyn) P. 249. pece ITMFSE; pice P.

For if thou lyuest after his lore · the shorter lyf the better
Si quis amat Cristum · mundum non diligit istum.
For thorw his breth bestes wexen · and abrode ȝeden,
Dixit et facta sunt, etc.:
Ergo thorw his breth mowen · men and bestes lyuen,
As holywrit witnesseth · whan men segge her graces,
Aperis tu manum tuam, et imples omne animal benediccione.
It is founden that fourty wynter · folke lyued with-outen tulyinge,
And oute of the flynte spronge the flode · that folke and bestes dronke.
And in Elyes tyme · heuene was yclosed,
That no reyne ne rone; · thus rede men in bokes,
That many wyntres men lyueden · and no mete ne tulyeden.
Seuene slepe, as seith the boke · seuene hundreth wynter,
And lyueden with-oute lyflode · and atte laste thei woken,
And if men lyued as mesure wolde · shulde neuere more be defaute
Amonges Cristene creatures · if Crystes wordes ben trewe.
Ac vnkyndnesse *caristia* maketh · amonges Crystene peple,
And ouer-plente maketh pruyde · amonges pore and riche;
Ac mesure is so moche worth · it may nouȝte be to dere,
For the meschief and the meschaunce · amonges men of Sodome
Wex thorw plente of payn · and of pure sleuthe;
Ociositas et habundancia panis peccatum turpissimum nutriuit.
For thei mesured nouȝt hem-self · of that thei ete and dronke,
Diden dedly synne · that the deuel lyked,
So vengeaunce fel vpon hem · for her vyle synnes;
Thei sonken in-to helle · tho citees vchone.
For-thi mesure we vs wel · and make owre faithe owre scheltroun,
And thorw faith cometh contricioun · conscience wote wel,
Whiche dryueth awey dedly synne · and doth it to be venial.
And though a man myȝte nouȝte speke · contricioun myȝte hym saue,
And brynge his soule to blisse · by so that feith bere witnesse,
That, whiles he lyued, he bileued · in the lore of holy-cherche;
Ergo contricioun, feith, and conscience · is kyndelich Dowel,

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B. 58. shorter WC; shotter L. 72. *caristia* RCOB; *carestia* L.

For yf thow lyuest after hus lore · the shorter lyf the betere;
Si quis amat Christum · mundum non diligit istum,
Sed quasi fetorem · spernes illius amorem.
Thorgh hus breth bestes woxen · and a-brode ȝeden;
Dixit et facta sunt.
Ergo thorw hus breth bestes lyuen · bothe men and fisshes,
As wytnesseth holy wryte · when we seyn oure graces,
Aperis tu manum tuam, et imples omne animal benedictione.
Hit is founde that fourty wynter · folke leueden and nouht tylede,
And out of flent sprange the flod · that folke and bestes dronken.

And in Elyes time · heuene was yclosed,
That no reyne reynede · thus redeth men in bookes,
That menye wynter men lyueden · and of no mete telden.
Seuene slepen, as seith the book · more than syxty wynter,
Lyueden with-outen lyflode · and at the laste a-wakeden.
And yf men lyueden as mesure wolde · sholde neuere be defaute
Among Crysten creatures · yf Crystes worde be trewe;
Dabo tibi secundum peticionem tuam.'

[*See note on* p. 403.]

C. 263. *This line is in* E *only.* 266. breth ITS; PEM *om.* 267. P *repeats* that. 268. P *om.* the. 272. slepen IMF; slupen PE. a (*for* as) P. 273. Leueden P; *see* l. 274. 275. trywe P.

And surgienes for dedly synnes · whan shrifte of mouth failleth.
Ac shrifte of mouth more worthy is · if man be inliche contrit;
For shrifte of mouth sleeth synne · be it neuere so dedly;
Per confessionem to a prest · *peccata occiduntur*,
There contricioun doth but dryueth it doun · in-to a venial synne,
As Dauid seith in the sauter · *et quorum tecta sunt peccata.*
Ac satisfaccioun seketh oute the rote · and bothe sleeth and voideth,
And, as it neuere had ybe · to nou3t bryngeth dedly synne,
That it neuere eft is seen, ne sore · but semeth a wounde yheled.'
'Where woneth Charite?' quod Haukyn · 'I wiste neuere in my lyue
Man that with hym spake · as wyde as I haue passed!'
'There parfit treuthe and pouere herte is · and pacience of tonge,
There is Charitee, the chief chaumbrere · for god hymselue!'
'Whether paciente pouerte,' quod Haukyn · 'be more plesaunte to owre dri3te
Than ricchesse ri3tfulliche ywonne · and resonablelich yspended?'
'3e,' *quis est ille?*' quod Pacience · 'quik *laudabimus eum!*
Though men rede of richchesse · ri3t to the worldes ende,
I wist neuere renke that riche was · that whan he rekne sholde,
Whan it drow to his deth-day · that he ne dred hym sore,
And that atte rekenyng in arrerage fel · rather than oute of dette.
There the pore dar plede · and preue by pure resoun,
To haue allowaunce of his lorde · by the lawe he it cleymeth,
Ioye that neuere Ioye hadde · of ri3tful Iugge he axeth,
And seith, "lo! briddes and bestes · that no blisse ne knoweth,
And wilde wormes in wodes · thorw wyntres thow hem greuest,
And makest hem welnyegh meke · and mylde for defaute,
And after thow sendest hem somer · that is her souereigne Ioye,
And blisse to alle that ben · bothe wilde and tame.
Thanne may beggeres, as bestes · after bote waiten,
That al her lyf han lyued · in langour and in defaute.
But god sent hem some tyme · some manere Ioye,
Other here or elles where · kynde wolde it neuere;
For to wrotherhele was he wrou3te · that neuere was Ioye shaped.
Angeles that in helle now ben · hadden Ioye some tyme,

B. 89. inlich RO; iliche L.

'What is parfit Pacience?' · quath *Activa uita.*
'Meeknesse and mylde speche · and men of on wil,
The whiche wil loue ledeth · to oure lordes place;
And that is Charite, chaumpion · chief of alle vertues,
And that is poure pacient · alle perilis to suffre."
'Where pouerte and pacience · plese more god almyghty
Than do ryghtful richesse · and resonably to spende?'
'3e, *quis est ille?*' quath Pacience · 'quyk *laudabimus eum!*
Thauh men rede of riche · ryght to the worldes ende,
I wist neuere renke that riche was · that whan he rekne sholde,
And whan he drouh hym to the deth · that he ne dradde hym sarrer
Than eny poure pacient · and that preoue ich by reyson.
Hit are bote fewe folke of these riche · that ne falleth in arerage,
Thar the poure dar plede · and preoue by pure reysoune
To haue a-lowaunce of hus lorde; · by lawe he cleymeth Ioye,
That neuere Ioye hadde · of rightful Iuge he asketh;
And seith, "lo, briddes and bestes · that no blisse knoweth,
And wilde wormes in wodes · thorw wynter thow hem greuest,
And makest hem wel ney meek · and mylde for defaute;
After than thow sendest hem somere · that is here souereyn Ioye,
And blisse to alle that been · bothe wilde and tame.
Then may beggers, as bestes · after blysse asken,
That al here lif hauen lyued · in langour and defaute."
Bote god sende hem som tyme · of som manner Ioye,
Other heer other elles-wher · elles were it reuthe;
For to wrother-hele was he wrou3t · that neuere was Ioye yshape.
Angeles that in helle now been · hadden som tyme Ioye,

C. 285. *This line is supplied from the* B-text, *to complete the sense; all the* C-text MSS. *omit it.* 288. thees P. arirage P. 289. dar IMFSET; der P. 291. rightful IFST; ryght PE. 294. ney E; nei *or* ner P. 295. seyndest P; *see* l. 299. here IST; hem P. 296. P *om.* that. 297. as ME; and PST. 299. sum (*1st time*) T; PEMFS *om.* 301. wrou3th P.

And *Diues* in deyntees lyued · and in *douce vye;*
Riȝte so resoun sheweth · that tho men that were riche,
And her makes also lyued · her lyf in murthe.
Ac god is of a wonder wille · by that kynde witte sheweth,
To ȝiue many men his mercymonye · ar he it haue deserued.
Riȝt so fareth god by some riche · reuthe me it thinketh,
For thei han her hyre here · an heuene as it were,
And is gret lykyng to lyue · with-oute laboure of body;
And when he deyeth, ben disalowed · as Dauid seith in the sauter,
Dormierunt, et nichil inuenerunt;
And in an other stede also · *velud sompnum surgencium,*
domine, in ciuitate tua, et ad nichilum rediges.
Allas! that ricchesse shal reue · and robbe mannes soule
Fram the loue of owre lorde · at his laste ende!
Hewen that han her hyre afore · aren euermore nedy,
And selden deieth he out of dette · that dyneth ar he deserue it,
And til he haue done his deuor · and his dayes iourne.
For whan a werkman hath wrouȝte · thanne may men se the sothe,
What he were worthi for his werke · and what he hath deserued;
And nouȝt to fonge bifore · for drede of disalowynge.
So I segge by ȝow riche · it semeth nouȝt that ȝe shulle
Haue heuene in ȝowre here-beyng · and heuene her-after;
Riȝt as a seruaunt taketh his salarye bifore · and sitth wolde clayme more,
As he that none hadde · and hath huyre atte laste.
It may nouȝt be, ȝe riche men · or Matheu on god lyeth;
De delicijs ad delicias, difficile est transire.
Ac if ye riche haue reuthe · and rewarde wel the pore,
And lyuen as lawe techeth · done leute to alle,
Criste of his curteysie · shal conforte ȝow atte laste,
And rewarde alle dowble ricchesse · that reuful hertes habbeth.
And as an hyne that hadde his hyre · ar he bygonne,
And whan he hath done his deuor wel · men doth hym other bounte,
ȝyueth hym a cote aboue his couenaunte · riȝte so Cryst ȝiueth heueue
Bothe to riche and to nouȝte riche · that rewfullich lybbeth;
And alle that done her deuor wel · han dowble hyre for her trauaille,
Here forȝyuenesse of her synnes · and heuene blisse after.

B. 144. *difficile* WCROB; *deficile* L. 145. ye WCROB; þe L.

And *Dives* in his deyntes lyuede · and in *douce uye;*
And now he buyeth hit ful bitere · he is a beggere of helle.

Many man hath hus Ioye here · for alle here wel dedes,
And lordes and ladyes ben callid · for leodes that thay haue,
And slepith, as hit semeth · and somere euere hem foleweth;
Whan deth a-waketh hem of here wele · that were here so ryche,
Than aren hit pure poure thynges · in purgatorie other in helle!
Dauid in the sauter · of suche maketh mynde,
And seith, *dormierunt sompnum suum; et nichil inuenerunt omnes uiri diuiciarum in manibus suis;*
Et alibi: Velut sompnum surgencium, et cet.

Hic explicit passus sextus de Dowel.

PASSUS XVII. (DO-WEL VII.)

Incipit passus septimus.

ALAS! that Richesse shall reue · and robbe mannes soule
Fro the loue of oure lorde · at hus laste ende!
Thei that haue hure hyre by-fore · aren eueremore poure,
And shulle nat deye out of dette · to dyne er they deseruen hit.
When here deuer is don · and his daies iourne,
Then may men wite what he is worth · and what he hath deserued;
And nouht to fonge by-fore · for drede of disalouwynge.
So ich say by 3ow riche · hit semeth nat 3e shulle
Haue two heuenes · for 3oure her-beynge.

C. 303. lyuede TS; lyuynge PEMF. 306. an (*for* and) P. 309. haren P. 310. shuche P. *sompnum suum* F (*only*). *in—suis* E (*only*).

Passus XVII. 1. richesse EMF; riche P. 2. Fro ETF; For PM. 6. white (*for* wite) P. deseruede P.

Ac it nys but selde yseyn · as by holy seyntes bokes,
That god rewarded double reste · to any riche wye.
For moche murthe is amonges riche · as in mete and clothynge,
And moche murthe in Maye is · amonges wilde bestes,
And so forth whil somer lasteth · her solace dureth.
Ac beggeres aboute Midsomer · bredlees thei soupe,
And ȝit is wynter for hem worse · for wete-shodde thei gange,
A-fyrst sore and afyngred · and foule yrebuked,
And arated of riche men · that reuthe is to here.
Now, lorde, sende hem somer · and some manere Ioye,
Heuene after her hennes-goynge · that here han suche defaute!
For alle myȝtest thow haue made · none mener than other,
And yliche witty and wyse · if the wel hadde lyked.
And haue reuthe on thise riche men · that rewarde nouȝte thi prisoneres;
Of the good that thow hem gyuest · *ingrati* ben manye;
Ac, god, of thi goodnesse · gyue hem grace to amende.
For may no derth ben hem dere · drouth, ne weet,
Ne noyther hete ne haille · haue thei here hele,
Of that thei wilne and wolde · wanteth hem nouȝt here.
Ac pore peple, thi prisoneres · lorde, in the put of myschief,
Conforte tho creatures · that moche care suffren
Thorw derth, thorw drouth · alle her dayes here,
Wo in wynter tymes · for wantyng of clothes,
And in somer tyme selde · soupen to the fulle;
Comforte thi careful · Cryst, in thi ryche,
For how thow confortest alle creatures · clerkes bereth witnesse,
Conuertimini ad me, et salui eritis:
Thus, *in genere* of his gentrice · Iesu Cryst seyde,
To robberes and to reueres · to riche and to pore.
Thow tauȝtest hem in the trinitee · to take baptesme,
And be clene thorw that crystennynge · of alle kynnes synnes;
And if vs fel thorw folye · to falle in synne after,
Confessioun, and knowlechyng · and crauyng thi mercy
Shulde amende vs as many sithes · as man wolde desire.
Ac if the pouke wolde plede here-aȝeine · and punyssh vs in conscience,

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B. 181. gentrice O; gentrise CB; gentries W; genitrice LR. 184. synnes RCO; synne WB; L *om.* 185. if WR; LCOB *om.* 186. knowleching CORB; knelechyng L. 188. pouke R; pope (!) LCWCOB; *see* l. 190.

Much myrthe is in May · a-monge wilde bestes,
And so forth whil somer lasteth · heore solace dureth;
And muche myrthe a-monge riche men is · that han meoble ynow and heele.
Ac beggers a-boute Myd-somere · bredlees thei soupe,
And ȝut is wynter for hem wors · for wet-shood thei gangen,
A-furst and a-fyngred · and foule rebuked
Of these worlde-riche men · that reuthe hit is to huyre.
Now, lord, send hem somer som-tyme · to solace and to Ioye,
That al here lyf leden · in lowenesse and in pouerte!
For alle myghtest thow haue maked · men of grete welthe,
And liche witty and wys · and lyue with-oute neode;
Ac for the b̄este, as ich hope · aren somme poure and some riche.
Ryght so haue reuthe of ous alle · that on the rode deydest,
And amende ous of thy mercy · and make ous alle meeke,
Louh and leel and louynge · and of herte poure;
And send ous contricion · to clanse with oure soules,
And confession, to culle · alle kynne synnes,
And satisfaccion, the whiche fulfulleth · the fadres will of heuene.
And these been Dowel and Dobet · and Dobest of alle;
Cordis contricio · cometh of sorwe in herte,
And *oris confessio* · that cometh of shrifte of mouthe,
And *operis satisfactio* · that for synnes payeth,
And for alle synnes · soueraynliche quiteth.
Cordis contricio, oris confessio, operis satisfactio;
These thre with-outen doute · tholen alle pouerte,
And lereth lewed and lered · heh and louh to knowe,
Ho that doth wel other bet · other best a-bouen alle;
And holichurche and charite · here-of a chartere maden.

C. 11. forth ET; furth F; fort P. whil F; while ET; wil P. 13. Ac F; But T; And PE. 14. whetshood P. 16. thes P. wordle P. 19. myghtes P. makede P. 20. and EFT; an P. 21. as ETF; P *om.* 22. roude P. 23. P *inserts* al *after* of. 33. Thees P. whitouten P.

He shulde take the acquitance as quik · and to the qued schewe it,
Pateat, etc., per passionem domini,
And putten of so the pouke · and preuen vs vnder borwe.
Ac the perchemyn of this patent · of pouerte be moste,
And of pure pacience · and parfit bileue.
Of pompe and of pruyde · the parchemyn decorreth,
And principaliche of alle peple · but thei be pore of herte.
Ellis is al an ydel · al that euere we writen,
Pater-nostres and penaunce · and pilgrimage to Rome.
But owre spences and spendynge · sprynge of a trewe wille,
Elles is al owre laboure loste; · lo! how men writeth
In fenestres atte freres · if fals be the foundement;
For-thi Crystene sholde ben in comune riche · none coueitouse for hym-selue.
For seuene synnes that there ben · assaillen vs euere,
The fende folweth hem alle · and fondeth hem to helpe,
Ac with ricchesse that ribaude · rathest men bigyleth.
For there that richesse regneth · reuerence folweth,
And that is plesaunte to Pryde · in pore and in riche.
And the riche is reuerenced · by resoun of his richchesse,
There the pore is put bihynde · and par auenture can more
Of witte and of wysdom · that fer awey is better
Than ricchesse or reaute · and rather yherde in heuene.
For the riche hath moche to rekene · and riȝte softe walketh,
The heigh waye to-heuene-ward · oft ricchesse letteth,
Ita inpossibile diuiti, etc.,
There the pore preseth bifor the riche · with a pakke at his rugge,
Opera enim illorum sequuntur illos.
Batauntliche, as beggeres done · and baldeliche he craueth,
For his pouerte and his pacience · a perpetuel blisse;
Beati pauperes, quoniam ipsorum est regnum celorum.
And Pryde in ricchesse regneth · rather than in pouerte,
Arst in the maister than in the man · some mansioun he hath.
Ac in pouerte there pacyence is · Pryde hath no myȝte,
Ne none of the seuene synnes · sitten ne mowe there longe,
Ne haue powere in pouerte · if pacyence it folwe.
For the pore is ay prest · to plese the riche,

B. 197. wille WCO; welle LRB. 211. *inpossibile* W; *possibile* LCROB. 212. *sequntur* LCRB.

Bote these thre that ich spak of · on domes day vs defenden,
Elles is in ydel · al oure lyuynge here,
Oure preyers and oure penaunce · and pilgrymages to Rome.
Bote oure spences and spending · sprynge of a trewe wille,
Elles is al oure labour lost; · lo, how men wryten
In fenestres at the freres · yf fals be the foundement!
For-thi Cristene men scholde been in comun riche · no couetise to hym-selue.
For seuene synnes that ther been · that assailen ous euere,
The fende folweth hem alle · and fondeth hem to helpe,
And with richesse tho ribaudes · rathest men by-gylen;
For ther that rychesse regneth · reuerences foleweth,
And that is plesaunt to Pruyde · in poure and in riche.
The ryche is yreuerenced · by reson of his richesse,
There the poure is yput by-hynde · and can parauntre more
Of wit and of wysedome · that fer wey is bettere
Than richesse other reaulte · and rather yhurde in heuene.
For the ryche hath muche to rekene · and ryȝt softe walkith
The heye wey to-heuene-warde; · he halt hit nat ful euene;
There the poure presseth by-fore · with a pak at hus rygge,
Opera enim illorum sequuntur illos.
Batauntlyche, as beggers don · and boldeliche he craueth,
For hus pouerte and pacience · perpetual Ioye.
Also Pruyde in richesse regneth · rather than in pouerte;
Other in the maister other in the man · som mancion he shewith.
Ac in pouerte ther pacience is · Pryude hath no myȝte,
Ne non of the seuene synnes · sitte ne may ther longe,
Ne haue power in pouerte · yf pacience hit folewe.
For the poure is ay prest · to plese the riche,

C. 37. thes P. vs TF; P *om.* 38. lyuynge ET; leuynge PF. 40. trywe P. 49. is EFTG; P *om.* yreuerencede P. is (*for* his) P. 51. wit FG; witt E; whiȝt P. fer EFT; feer P. 52. an (*for* and) P. 53. ryȝth P. 55. whit P. *seguntur* P. 60. myȝghte P. 61. ne may EF; may T; no man (!) P. 63. prest EFTG; preest P.

And buxome at his byddyng · for his broke loues;
And buxomenesse and boste · aren euer-more at werre,
And ayther hateth other · in alle manere werkes.
If Wratthe wrastel with the pore · he hath the worse ende;
For if they bothe pleyne · the pore is but fieble,
And if he chyde or chatre · hym chieueth the worse;
For loulich he loketh · and loueliche is his speche,
That mete or mone · of other men mote asken.
And if Glotonie greue pouerte · he gadereth the lasse,
For his rentes ne wol nauȝte reche · no riche metes to bugge;
And thouȝ his glotonye be to gode ale · he goth to cold beddynge,
And his heued vn-heled · vn-esiliche i-wrye;
For whan he streyneth hym to streche · the strawe is his schetes;
So for his glotonie and his grete scleuthe · he hath a greuous penaunce,
That is welawo whan he waketh · and wepeth for colde,
And sum tyme for his synnes · so he is neuere murie,
Withoute mornynge amonge · and mischief to bote.
And if Coueitise wolde cacche the pore · thei may nouȝt come togideres,
And by the nekke namely · her none may hente other.
For men knoweth wel that Coueitise · is of a kene wille,
And hath hondes and armes · of a longe lengthe.
And pouerte nis but a petit thinge · appereth nouȝt to his nauele,
And louely layke was it neuere · bitwene the longe and the shorte.
And though Auarice wolde angre the pore · he hath but litel myȝte,
For pouerte hath but pokes · to putten in his godis,
There Auarice hath almaries · and yren-bounde coffres;
And whether be liȝter to breke? · lasse boste it maketh,
A beggeres bagge · than an yren-bounde coffre!
Lecherye loueth hym nouȝt · for he ȝeueth but lytel syluer,
Ne doth hym nouȝte dyne delycatly · ne drynke wyn oft.
A strawe for the stuwes! · it stode nouȝt, I trowe,
Had thei no thyng but of pore men · her houses were vntyled!
And though Sleuthe suwe pouerte · and serue nouȝt god to paye,

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B. 227–237. *These lines are in* R *only.* 242. nauele WCR; naule L. 252. no thyng WCOB; none L. *For* vntyled, O *has* vnhiled (*perhaps better*).

And buxume at his biddyng · for hus breed and drynke;
And buxumnesse and bost · aren euere-more at wratthe,
And ayther hateth other · and mowen nat dwelle to-gederes.
Yf Wratthe wraxle with the poure · he hath the worsse ende;
For yf thei bothe pleyne · the poure is bote fyble,
And yf he childe other chatere · hym chyuyth the worsse.
For loueliche he lokyth · and louh is hus speche,
That mete other moneye · of straunge men mote begge.
And yf Glotenye greue pouerte · he gadereth the lasse,
For hus rentes wol nat reche · ryche metes to bigge;
Thauh hus glotenye be of good ale · he goth to a cold beddyng,
And hus heued vn-heled · vneisyliche ywrye;
For when he streyneth hym to strecche · the straw is hus whitel;
So for hus glotonye and grete synne · he hath a greuous penaunce,

That is weylawey whan he awaketh · and wepeth for colde;
So is he neuere more ful murye · so meschief hym folweth.

Thaugh Couetyce wolde with the poure wraxle · thei mai nat come to-gederis,
By the necke nameliche · her neither may henten other.
For men knoweth that Couetise · is of ful kene wil,
And hath hondes and armes · of a long lengthe,
And pouerte is a pety thyng · apereth nat to hus nauele;
A loueliche laik was hit neuere · by-twyne a long and a short.

Thauh Auarice wolde angrye pouerte · he hath bote lytel myȝte;

For pouerte hath bote pokes · to putten yn hus goodes,
Ther Auarice hath almaries · and yre-bounden cofres.
And whether be betere to breke · lasse boost hit maketh,
To breke a beggers bagge · than an yre-bounden cofre?
Lecherye loueth none poure · for he hath bote lytel seluer,
Ne doth men dyne dylicatliche · neyther drynk wyne ofte.
A straw for the stywes! · hy stod nat ful longe
And thay hadde non other haunt · bote of poure peple!
Thauh Slewthe suwe pouerte · and serue nat god to paye,

C. 64. is (*for* his) P. 68. pleyne FT; pleyn E; pleyen P. his (*for* is P. 80. whit (*for* with) P. 86, 88. auerice P. myȝthe P. 88. an (*for* and) P.

Mischief is his maister · and maketh hym to thynke,
That god is his grettest helpe · and no gome elles,
And his seruaunt, as he seith · and of his sute bothe.
And where he be or be nou3te · he bereth the signe of pouerte,
And in that secte owre saueoure · saued al mankynde.
For-thi al pore that paciente is · may claymen and asken
After her endynge here · heuene-riche blisse.
Moche hardier may he axen · that here my3te haue his wille
In londe and in lordship · and likynge of bodye,
And for goddis loue leueth al · and lyueth as a beggere;
And as a mayde for mannes loue · her moder forsaketh,
Hir fader and alle her frendes · and folweth hir make,

Moche is suche a mayde to louie · of hym that such one taketh,
More than a mayden is · that is maried thorw brokage,
As bi assent of sondry partyes · and syluer to bote,
More for coueitise of good · than kynde loue of bothe;—
So it fareth bi eche a persone · that possessioun forsaketh,
And put hym to be pacient · and pouerte weddeth,
The which is sybbe to god hym-self · and so to his seyntes.'
'Haue god my trouthe,' quod Haukyn · '3e preyse faste Pouerte;
What is Pouerte with pacience,' quod he · 'proprely to mene?'

'*Paupertas*,' quod Pacience · '*est odibile bonum,*
Remocio curarum, possessio sine calumpnia, donum dei, sanitatis mater;
Absque solicitudine semita, sapiencie temperatrix, negocium sine dampno;
Incerta fortuna, absque soliciludine felicitas.'
'I can nou3t construe al this,' quod Haukyn · '3e moste kenne me this on Englisch.'
'In Englisch,' quod Pacyence, 'it is wel harde · wel to expounen;
Ac somdel I shal seyne it · by so thow vnderstonde.

(1) Pouerte is the first poynte · that Pryde moste hateth,
Thanne is it good by good skil · al that agasteth Pryde.

B. 263. an (*for* and) L. 276. me WR; L *om.*

Meschief is ay a mene · and maketh hym to thenke,
That god is hus grettest help · and no gome elles,
And he is seruaunt al-way, he seith · and of hus secte bothe.
And whether he be other be nat · he berith the sygne of pouerte,
And in that secte oure sauyour · sauede al mankynde.
For-thi alle poure that pacient is · of pure ryght may cleyme
After here endyng heere · heuene-riche blysse.
Much hardyloker may he aske · that her may haue hus will
In londe and in lordshepes · and lykynge of body,
And for goddes loue leueth al · and lyueth as a beggere.
As a mayde for a mannes loue · here moder for-saketh,
Hure fader and hure frendes · and gooth forth with hure paramour;
Muche is suche a mayde to loue · of a man that suche on taketh
More than that maide is · that is ymaried by brocage,
As by asent of sondry bodyes · and seluer to bote,
More for couetice of catel · than kynde loue of the mariage.
So hit farith by ech a persone · that possession forsaketh,
And putteth hym to be pacient · and to pouerte hym weddeth,
The whyche is sibbe to Cryst self · and semblable bothe.'
Quath Actyf tho al angryliche · and argueynge as hit were,
'What is Pouerte pacient?' quath he · 'ich praye that thou telle hit.'
'*Paupertas*,' quath Pacience · '*est odibile bonum,*
Remocio curarum, possessio sine calumpnia, donum dei, sanitatis mater;
Absque solicitudine semita, sapiencie temperatrix, negocium sine dampno;
Incerta fortuna, absque solicitudine felicitas.'
'Ich can nat construen al this' · quath *Activa-uita.*
'Parfay,' quath Pacience · 'propreliche to telle
In English, hit is ful harde · ac somdel ich shal telle the.

DISTINCTIO PAUPERTATIS.

(1) Pouerte is the firste poynte · that Pruyde most hateth;
"Thanne is pouerte good," quath Good Skyle · "thauh hit greue a lytel,

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C. 97. god is EFTG; good (*om.* is) P. 101. pure FG; pur T; poure PE (*by confusion*). 102. Affter P. 104. lonnde P. 105. goddes EFT; godes G; goodes P. 108. *of—taketh* EFG; P *repeats* here moder for-saketh.

Riȝte as contricioun is confortable thinge · conscience wote wel,
And a sorwe of hym-self · and a solace to the sowle,
So pouerte propreliche · penaunce, and ioye,
Is to the body · pure spiritual helthe,
Ergo paupertas est odibile bonum,
And contricioun confort · and *cura animarum.*
(2) Selde sit pouerte · the sothe to declare,
Or as Iustyce to Iugge men · enioigned is no pore,
Ne to be a maire aboue men · ne mynystre vnder kynges;
Selden is any pore yput · to punysshen any peple;
Remocio curarum.
Ergo pouerte and pore men · perfornen the comaundement,
Nolite iudicare quemquam. The thridde:—
(3) Selde is any pore riche · but of riȝtful heritage;
Wynneth he nauȝt with weghtes fals · ne with vnseled mesures,
Ne borweth of his neghbores · but that he may wel paye,
Possessio sine calumpnia.
(4) The fierthe is a fortune · that florissheth the soule
Wyth sobrete fram al synne · and also ȝit more;
It affaiteth the flesshe · fram folyes ful manye,
A collateral conforte · Crystes owne ȝifte,
Donum dei.
(5) The fyfte is moder of helthe · a frende in alle fondynges,
And for the land euere a leche · a lemman of al clennesse,
Sanitatis mater.
(6) The sexte is a path of pees · ȝe, thorw the pas of Altoun
Pouerte myȝte passe · with-oute peril of robbynge,
For there that pouerte passeth · pees folweth after,
And euere the lasse that he bereth · the hardyer he is of herte;
For-thi seith Seneca · *paupertas est absque solicitudine semita,*
And an hardy man of herte · amonge an hepe of theues;
Cantabit pauper coram latrone viator.
(7) The seueneth is welle of wisdome · and fewe wordes sheweth,
For lordes alloweth hym litel · or lysteneth to his reson,
He tempreth the tonge to-treuthe-ward · and no tresore coueiteth;
Sapiencie temperatrix.

B. 286. sit WR; sitte LCO. 290. *The words* The thridde *are only a title to the next paragraph.* 305. *pauper* O; *paupertas* LWCRB (*badly*).

Al that may putten of Pruyde · in place ther he regneth."
Remocio curarum :—
(2) For selde sitt pouerte · the sothe to declare;
As a Iustice to Iuge men · men enioyneth ther-to no poure,
Ne to be a mayre ouere men · ne mynistre vnder kynges.
Selde is the poure yput · to punysshe eny peuple,
Ergo pouerte and poure men · parfournen the comaundement,
Nolite iudicare quemquam.
Possessio sine calumpnia :—
(3) Selde is the poure ryght riche · bote of hus riȝtful heritage,
He wynneth nat with wyghtes fals · ne with vnseled mesures,
Ne borweth of his neyghebore · bote that he may wel paye,
And lyghtly men leneth to fewe men · and men wene hym poure.
(4) The feorthe is a fortune · that florisshith the soule
With sobrete from alle synnes · and al-so ȝut more;
Hit defendeth the flessh · fro folyes ful menye:
And a collateral confort · Crystes owen sonde;
Donum dei.
(5) ȝut hit is moder of myȝt · and of mannes helthe,
And frende in alle fondynges · and of foule vueles leche,
Sanitatis mater.
(6) The syxte, hit is a path of pees · ȝe, thorw the pas of Altoun
Pouerte myghte passe · with-oute peril of robbynge.
For ther as pouerte passeth · pees folweth commenliche,
And euere the lasse that eny lyf ledeth · the lyghter hus herte is there,
As he that wot neuere with wham · in nyghtes to mete;
Paupertas est sine solicitudine semita : Seneca.
(7) The seuethe, hit is a welle of wysedome · and fewe wordes sheweth,
For lordes aloweth hym lytel · other leyth ere to hus reisone;
He tempreth hus tonge to-treuthe-ward · that no tresour coueyteth;
Sapiencie temperatrix.

C. 124. selde EG; seilde P. 127. Selde ETG; Seilde P. yput TG; I-put F; pitt P; *see* l. 50. 129. Selde ETG; Seilde P. riȝtful FT; ryght PE. 130. whyghtes P. 131. is (*for* his) P. 132. lyghly (*by mistake*) P. wene EFTG; P *om.* 134. from FT; aȝen E; whith P. 135. defendeth FET; defendit P. 137. myȝth P. altoun EF; haultone P. 143. nyȝtes E; niȝtes tyme T; myghtes P. 144. weelle P.

(8) The eigteth is a lele laborere · and loth to take more
Than he may wel deserue · in somer or in wynter,
And if he chaffareth, he chargeth no losse · mowe he charite wynne;
Negocium sine dampno.
(9) The nyneth is swete to the soule · no sugre is swettere;
For pacyence is payn · for pouerte hym-selue,
And sobrete swete drynke · and good leche in sykenesse,
Thus lered me a lettred man · for owre lordes loue,
Seynt Austyn, a blissed lyf · with-outen bysynesse,
For body and for soule · *absque solicitudine felicitas.*
Now god, that al good gyueth · graunt his soule reste,
That thus fyrst wrote to wyssen men · what Pouerte was to mene!'
'Allas!' quod Haukyn the actyf man tho · 'that, after my Crystendome,
I ne hadde ben den and doluen · for Doweles sake!
So harde it is,' quod Haukyn · 'to lyue and to do synne.
Synne suweth vs euere,' quod he · and sori gan wexe,
And wepte water with his eyghen · and weyled the tyme,
That euere he dede dede · that dere god displesed;
Swowed and sobbed · and syked ful ofte,
That euere he hadde londe or lordship · lasse other more,
Or maystrye ouer any man · mo than of hym-self.
'I were nou3t worthy, wote god,' quod Haukyn · 'to were any clothes,
Ne noyther sherte ne shone · saue for shame one,
To keure my caroigne,' quod he · and cryde mercye faste,
And wepte and weyled · and there-with I awaked.

B. 311. L *om.* 1*st* he.

(8) The eyhtethe, hit is a leel labour · and loth to take more.
Than he may sothliche deserue · in somer other in wynter;
And thauh he chaffare, he chargeth no los · mowe he charite wynne;
Negocium sine dampno.
(9) The nyethe, hit is swete to soules · is no suger swettere;
For pacience is hus paneter · and payn to pouerte fyndeth,
And sobrete ȝeueth here swete drynke · and solaceth here in alle angres.
Thus leryde me a lerede man · for oure lordes loue, seint Austyn,
That pure pouerte and pacience · was a louh lyuynge in erthe,
A blessid lyf with-oute busynesse · bote oneliche for the soule;
Absque solicitudine felicitas.
Now god that al thynge gyueth · graunte hus saule reste,
That wrot this to wisse men · what Pouerte was to mene!'

C. 150. (*2nd*) is T; ther is F; PEG *om.* 152. heere P (*twice*).

PASSUS XV (PROLOGUE TO DO-BET).

Passus xv^us^ : finit Dowel, et incipit Dobet.

AC after my wakyng · it was wonder longe,
Ar I couth kyndely · knowe what was Dowel.
And so my witte wex and wanyed · til I a fole were,
And somme lakked my lyf · allowed it fewe,
And leten me for a lorel · and loth to reuerencen
Lordes or ladyes · or any lyf elles,
As persones in pellure · with pendauntes of syluer;
To seriauntz ne to suche · seyde nou3te ones,
"God loke 3ow, lordes!" · ne louted faire;
That folke helden me a fole · and in that folye I raued,
Tyl Resoun hadde reuthe on me · and rokked me aslepe,
Tyl I seigh, as it sorcerye were · a sotyl thinge with-al,
One with-outen tonge and teeth · tolde me whyder I shulde,
And wher-of I cam and of what kynde; · I coniured hym atte laste,
If he were Crystes creature · for Crystes loue me to tellen.
'I am Crystes creature,' quod he · 'and Crystene in many a place,
In Crystes courte i-knowe wel · and of his kynne a partye.
Is noyther Peter the porter · ne Poule with his fauchoune,
That wil defende me the dore · dynge ich neure so late.
At mydny3t, at mydday · my voice so is yknowe,
That eche a creature of his courte · welcometh me fayre.'
'What ar 3e called,' quod I, 'in that courte · amonges Crystes peple?'
'The whiles I quykke the corps,' quod he · 'called am I *Anima;*
And whan I wilne and wolde · *Animus* ich hatte;
And for that I can and knowe · called am I *Mens;*
And whan I make mone to god · *Memoria* is my name;
And whan I deme domes · and do as treuthe techeth,

B. 5. me WRB; LCO *om.* 19. Tha (*for* That) L.

Thenne hadde Actyf a ledere · that heyhte *Liberum-arbitrium*,
That knewe Conscience ful wel · and Clergie bothe;
'He that hath londe and lordshep,' quath he · 'at the laste ende
Shal be pourest of power · at hus partyng hennes.'
Thenne ich wondrede what he was · this *Liberum-arbitrium*,
And prayede Pacience · that ich a-pose hym moste.
And he suffrede me and seide · 'assay hus other name.'

'Leue *Liberum-arbitrium*,' quath ich · 'of what londe ar ye?
3if thow be Cristes creature · for Cristes loue, tel me.'
'Ich am Cristes creature,' quath he · 'and Cristine in menye place,
And in Cristes court yknowe · and of hus kynne a partye;
Is nother Peter the porter · ne Paul with his fauchon,
That wolde defende me heuene dore · dynge ich neuere so late.
At myd-ny3t, at mydday · my uoise is so yknowe,
That eche creature that loueth Criste · welcometh me faire.'
'Wher-of serue 3e?' ich seide · 'syre *Liberum-arbitrium*?'
'Of som tyme to fyghte,' quath he · 'falsnesse to destruye,
And som tyme to suffre · bothe sorwe and teene,
Layke other leue · at my lykynge chese,
To do wel other wikke · a wil with a reyson,
And may nat be with-oute a body · to bere me wher hym lyketh.'
'Thenne is that body bettere than thow,' quath ich · 'nay,' quath he, 'no betere;
Bote as a wode were a fure · thenne worchen thei bothe,
And ayther is otheres heete · and also of a wil;
And so is man that hath hus mynde · myd *Liberum-arbitrium*.
And the whyle ich quyke the cors · cald am ich *Anima*;
And whenne ich wilne other wolde · *Animus* ich hyhte,
And for that ich can and knowe · cald ich am "mannys Thouht;"
And whan ich make mone to god · *Memoria* ich hatte;
And when ich deme domes · and do as treuthe techeth,

C. 160. lonnde P. 162. thees (*for* this) P. 164. he MFTG; PE *om.* 171. ny3th P. 172. wolcometh P. 177. wikke T; wicke EM; wike P. 180. thei M; PEFTG *om.*; *but it is well to keep it.* 183. cors TG; cours P; corps M.

Thanne is *Racio* my riȝt name · Resoun an Englisshe;
And whan I fele that folke telleth · my firste name is *Sensus*,
And that is wytte and wisdome · the welle of alle craftes;
And whan I chalange or chalange nouȝte · chepe or refuse,
Thanne am I Conscience ycalde · goddis clerke and his notarie;
And whan I loue lelly · owre lorde and alle other,

Thanne is lele Loue my name · and in Latyn *Amor;*
And whan I flye fro the flesshe · and forsake the caroigne,
Thanne am I spirit specheles · and *Spiritus* thanne ich hatte.
Austyn and Ysodorus · ayther of hem bothe
Nempned me thus to name; · now thow myȝte chese,
How thow coueitest to calle me · now thow knowest alle my names.

Anima pro diuersis actionibus diuersa nomina sortitur: dum viuificat corpus, Anima est; dum vult, Animus est; dum scit, Mens est; dum recolit, Memoria est. Dum iudicat, Racio est; dum sentit, Sensus est; dum amat, Amor est; dum negat vel consentit, Consciencia est; dum spirat, Spiritus est.'

'Ȝe ben as a bisshop,' quod I · al bourdynge that tyme,
'For bisshopes yblessed · thei bereth many names,
Presul and *pontifex* · and *metropolitanus*,
And other names an hepe · *episcopus* and *pastor*.'
'That is soth,' seyde he · 'now I se thi wille!
Thow woldest knowe and kunne · the cause of alle her names,

And of myne, if thow myȝtest · me thinketh by thi speche!'
'Ȝe, syre,' I seyde · 'by so no man were greued,
Alle the sciences vnder sonne · and alle the sotyle craftes
I wolde I knewe and couth · kyndely in myne herte!'
'Thanne artow inparfit,' quod he · 'and one of Prydes knyȝtes;

For such a luste and lykynge · Lucifer fel fram heuene:
Ponam pedem meum in aquilone, et similis ero altissimo.

Then is *Racio* my ryhte name · "Reson" in Englissh;
And whenne ich fele that folke telleth · my furste name is *Sensus*,
And that is witte and wisedome · the welle of alle craftes;
And when ich chalange other nat chalange · chepe other refuse,
Thanne am ich *Conscientia* cald · godes clerk and hus notarie;
And when ich wol do other nat do · goode dedes other ille,
Then am ich *Liberum-arbitrium* · as lettrede men tellen;
And when ich loue leelly · oure lord and alle othere,
Then is "leel Loue" my name · in Latyn that is *Amor;*
And when ich flee fro the body · and feye leue the caroygne,
Then am ich a spirit specheles · and *Spiritus* thenne ich hote.
Austyn and Ysidorus · ayther of hem bothe
Nempnede me this to name · thow now myght cheese
How thow coueitest to calle me · now knowest thow alle myne names.

Anima pro diuersis actionibus diuersa nomina sortitur; dum uiuificat corpus, Anima est. dum uult, Animus est; dum recolit, Memoria est; dum iudicat, Racio est; dum sentit, Sensus est; dum amat, Amor est; dum declinat a malo ad bonum, Liberum arbitrium est; dum negat uel consentit, Consciencia est; dum spirat, Spiritus est.'

'3e ben as a bischop,' quath ich · al bordynge that tyme,
'For bischopes blessed · thei bereth meny names,
Presul and *pontifex* · and *metropolitanus*,
And other names an hepe · *episcopus* and *pastor.*'
'That is soth,' he seide · 'now ich seo thy wil
How thow woldest know and conne · the cause of alle here names,
And of myne, yf thow myghtest · me thynketh by thy speche!'
'3e, syre,' ich seyde, 'by so · that no man were a-greued,
Alle the science vnder sonne · and alle sotile craftes
Ich wolde ich knewe and couthe · kyndeliche in myn herte.'
'Thanne art thow inparfyt,' quath he · 'and on of Prydes knyghtes;
For suche a luste and lykynge · Lucifer fel fro heuene;
Ponam pedem meum in aquilone, et ero similis altissimo.

C. 202. bischop EF; bihsshep P. 203. bischopes E; bihsshopes P. 209. a-greuede P. 212. art MFT; ert PEG. inparfyȝt P. 213. louste P. feel (*for* fel) P.

It were aȝeynes kynde,' quod he · 'and alkynnes resoun,
That any creature shulde kunne al · excepte Cryste one.
Aȝein such Salomon speketh · and dispiseth her wittes,
And seith, *sicut qui mel comedit multum, non est ei bonum:*
sic qui scrutator est maiestatis, opprimitur a gloria.
To Englisch-men this is to mene · that mowen speke and here,
The man that moche hony eteth · his mawe it engleymeth;
And the more that a man · of good mater hereth,
But he do ther-after · it doth hym double scathe:
Beatus est, seith seynt Bernard · *qui scripturas legit,*
Et verba vertit in opera · fullich to his powere.
Coueytise to kunne · and to knowe science
Pulte out of paradys · Adam and Eue;
Sciencie appetitus hominem inmortalitatis gloria spoliauit.
And riȝte as hony is yuel to defye · and engleymeth the mawe,
Riȝt so that thorw resoun · wolde the rote knowe
Of god and of his grete myȝtes · his graces it letteth.
For in the lykyng lith a pryde · and a lycames coueitise,
Aȝein Crystes conseille · and alle clerkes techyng,
That is, *non plus sapere quam oportet sapere.*
Freres and fele other maistres · that to the lewed men prechen,
ȝe moeuen materes inmesurables · to tellen of the trinite,
That ofte tymes the lewed peple · of hir bileue douten.
Bettere byleue were mony · doctoures such techyng,
And tellen men of the ten comaundementz · and touchen the seuene synnes,
And of the braunches that burgeouneth of hem · and bryngeth men to helle,
And how that folke in folyes · myspenden her fyue wittes,
As wel freres as other folke · folilich spenen
In housyng, in haterynge · and in-to hiegh clergye shewynge,
More for pompe than for pure charite · the poeple wote the sothe
That I lye nouȝt, loo! · for lordes ȝe plesen,
And reuerencen the riche · the rather for her syluer;
Confundantur omnes qui adorant sculptilia; et alibi:
Vt quid diligitis vanitatem, et queritis mendacium?
Go to the glose of the verse · ȝe grete clerkes;
If I lye on ȝow to my lewed witte · ledeth me to brennynge!

B. 62. *gloria* WO; *gloriam* LCRB. 79. *scultilia* L.

Hit were a-geyn kynde,' quath he · 'and alle kynne resoun
That eny creature sholde conne al · excepte Cryst one.
Aȝene alle suche Salamon speketh · and dispiseth here wittes,
And seith, *sicut qui mel comedit multum, non ei bonum est :—*
sic qui scrutator est magestatis, opprimetur a gloria.
To Englissh-men this is to mene · that mowen speke and huyre,
The man that muche hony eet · his mawe hit engleymeth:
The wyttiour that eny wight is · bote yf he worche ther-after,
The biterour he shal a-bygge · bote yf he wel worche;
Beatus, seith seynt Bernard · *qui scripturas legit,*
Et uerba uertit in opera · emforth his power.
Couetise to conne · and to knowe sciences
Putte oute of paradys · Adam and Eue;
Sciencie appetitus hominem immortalitatis gloria spoliauit.
And ryght so as hony · is vuel to defie,
Ryght so sothly sciences · swelleth in a mannes saule,
And doth hym to be deynous · and deme that beth nat lerede;

Non plus sapere · seide the wyse,
Quam oportet sapere · lest synne of pruyde wexe.
Freres fele sithes · to the folke that thei prechen
Meuen motifs meny tymes · insolibles and fallaces,
That bothe lered and lewed · of here by-leyue douten;

To teche the ten commaundemens · were ten sithe bettere,

And how that folke folyliche · here fif wittes myspenden,
As wel freres as other folk · foliliche spenden
In housyng and in helyynge · in hih cleregie shewynge,
More for pomp and prude · as the peuple wot wel
That ich lye nat, loo · for lordes thei plesen,
And reuerenceth the ryche · the rather for here seluer,

C. 214. reisoune P. 216. MSS. *opprimatur*; but read *opprimetur*. 217. mene MFT; mete PE. 218. is (*for* his) P. 219. whyttiour P. whight P. 220. wel M; wol PETG. 223. sciences EMTFG; science P; *see* l. 226. 224. Pute P. *gloria* MFT; *gloriam* PEG. 234. that EMFTG; the P. 235. folliliche P. 238. plesyn P.

For as it semeth, ȝe forsaketh · no mannes almesse,
Of vsureres, of hores · of auarous chapmen,
And louten to this lordes · that mowen lene ȝow nobles,
Aȝeine ȝowre reule and religioun · I take recorde at Iesus,
That seide to his disciples · *ne sitis personarum acceptores.*
Of this matere I myȝte · make a longe bible,
Ac of curatoures of crystene peple · as clerkes bereth witnesse,
I shal tellen it for treuth sake · take hede who so lyketh!
As holynesse and honeste · oute of holicherche spredeth
Thorw lele libbyng men · that goddes lawe techen,
Riȝt so out of holicherche · alle yueles spredeth,
There inparfyt presthod is · prechoures and techeres.
And se it by ensample · in somer-tyme on trowes,
There somme bowes ben leued · and somme bereth none;
There is a myschief in the more · of suche manere bowes.
Riȝt so persones and prestes · and prechoures of holy cherche,
That aren rote of the riȝte faith · to reule the peple;
Ac there the rote is roten · reson wote the sothe,
Shal neure floure ne frute · ne faire leef be grene.
For-thi, wolde ȝe lettred leue · the leccherye of clothynge,
And be kynde, as bifel for clerkes · and curteise of Crystes goodes,
Trewe of ȝowre tonge · and of ȝowre taille bothe,
And hatien to here harlotrye · and nouȝt to vnderfonge
Tythes of vntrewe thinge · ytilied or chaffared,
Lothe were lewed men · but thei ȝowre lore folwed,
And amenden hem that mysdon · more for ȝowre ensamples,
Than forto prechen and preue it nouȝt · ypocrysie it semeth.
For ypocrysie in Latyn · is lykned to a dongehul,
That were bysnewed with snowe · and snakes wyth-inne;
Or to a wal that were whitlymed · and were foule wyth-inne.
Riȝt so many prestes · prechoures and prelates,
ȝe aren enblaunched with *bele paroles* · and with clothes also,
Ac ȝowre werkes and ȝowre wordes there-vnder · aren ful vnlouelich.
Iohannes Crysostomus · of clerkes speketh and prestes,
Sicut de templo omne bonum progreditur, sic de templo omne malum procedit.

B. 90. honeste WCROB; honestete L.

Aȝens the counsail of Cryst · as holy cleregye witnesseth;
Ne sitis acceptores personarum.
Loo, what holy wryt wyttnesseth · of wikked techeres;
As holyness and honeste · out of holy churche
Spryngeth and spredeth · and enspireth the peuple
Thorgh parfit preest-hood · and prelates of holichurche,
Ryght so out of holychurche · al vuel spredeth,
Ther imparfit preest-hod is · prechours and techours.
And seo hit by ensample · of trees in somer-tyme,
Ther somme bowes bereth leues · and somme bereth none;
The bowes that bereth nat · and beeth nat grene-leuede,
Ther is a myschif in the more · of suche manere stockes.
Ryght so persones and preestes · and prechers of holy churche
Ys the rote of the ryght feithe · to reuwele the peuple;
Ac ther the rote is roten · reson wot the sothe,
Shal neuere floure ne frut wexe · ne fair leef be grene.
For wolde ȝe letteride leue · the lecherie of clothinge,
And be courteis and kynde · of holykirke goodes,
Parte with the poure · and ȝoure pruyde leue,
And therto trewe of ȝoure tonge · and of ȝoure tail also,
And haten harlotrie · and to vnderfonge the tythes
Of vserers and of hores · and of al vuel wynnynges,
Loth were lewede men · bote thei ȝoure lore folweden,
And a-menden hem of here mysdedes · more for ȝoure ensamples
Than for to preche and preuen hit nat; · ypocrisie hit semeth!
Ypocrisie is a braunche of pruyde · and most among clerkes,
And is ylikned in Latyn · to a lothliche dounghep,
That were by-snywe al with snow · and snakes with-ynne,
Or to a wal whit-lymed · and were blak with-inne.
Ryȝt so meny preestes · prechours and prelates,
That beth enblaunched with *bele paroles* · and with *bele* clothes;
And as lambes thei loken · and lyuen as wolues.
Iohannes Crisostomus · karpeth thus of clerkes,
Sicut de templo omne bonum progreditur, sic de templo omne malum procedit.

C. 240. whittnesseth P. 242. honeste EMFTG; honestete P. 246, 248, 250. Theer (*for* Ther) P. 252. (*2nd*) the MTF; PEG *om.* ryghit P. 255. ȝe MT; the PEG. 256. kirke T; churche P. 257. with the EMFT; whithe P. 258. trywe P. 259. and MFTG; PE *om.* 265. is MFT; PEG *om.* 267. *This line is in* T *only.*

Si sacerdocium integrum fuerit, tota floret ecclesia; si autem coruptum fuerit, omnium fides marcida est.
Si sacerdocium fuerit in peccatis, totus populus conuertitur ad peccandum.
Sicut cum videris arborem pallidam et marcidam, inteligis quod vicium habet in radice,
Ita cum videris populum indisciplinatum et irreligiosum, sine dubio sacerdocium eius non est sanum.

If lewed men wist · what this Latyn meneth,
And who was myn auctor · moche wonder me thinketh,
But if many a prest bere · for here baselardes and here broches,
A peyre bedes in her hande · and a boke vnder her arme.
Sire Iohan and sire Geffray · hath a gerdel of syluer,
A basellarde, or a ballokknyf · with botones ouergylte.
Ac a portous that shulde be his plow · *placebo* to segge,
Hadde he neure seruyse to saue syluer ther-to · seith it with yvel wille!
Allas! ȝe lewed men · moche lese ȝe on prestes,
Ac thinge that wykkedlich is wonne · and with false sleigthes,
Wolde neuere witte of witty god · but wikked men it hadde;
The which aren prestes inparfit · and prechoures after syluer,
Sectoures and sudenes · somnoures and her lemmannes.
This that with gyle was geten · vngraciouslich is spended;
So harlotes and hores · ar hulpen with such goodis,
And goddes folke for defaute ther-of · forfaren and spillen.
Curatoures of holykirke · as clerkes that ben auerouse,
Liȝtlich that they leuen · loselles it habbeth,
Or dyeth intestate · and thanne the bisshop entreth,
And maketh murthe there-with · and his men bothe,
And seggen, "he was a nygarde · that no good myȝte aspare
To frende ne to fremmed · the fende haue his soule!
For a wrecched hous he helde · al his lyf tyme;
And that he spared and bispered · spene we in murthe."
By lered, by lewed · that loth is to spende,
Thus gone her godes · be the goste faren.
Ac for good men, god wote · gret dole men maken,
And bymeneth good mete-ȝyueres · and in mynde haueth,

B. 119. MS. O (*which in* l. 118 *has* heer *for* bere) *has a totally different line here, viz.* Schulden go synge seruyseles · with sire philip the sparwe. 136. aspare WCRB; asspare L.

Si sacerdocium integrum fuerit, tota floret ecclesia; si autem corruptum fuerit, omnium fides marcida est.
Si sacerdocium fuerit in peccatis, totus populus conuertitur ad peccandum.
Sicut cum uideris arborem pallidam et marcidam, intelligis quod uicium habet in radice,
Ita cum uideris populum indisciplinatum et irreligiosum, sine dubio sacerdocium eius non est sanum.

Alas! lewede men · muche leese ȝe that fynden
Vnkynde creatures · to beo kepers of ȝoure soules!
Ac thyng that wikkedliche is wonne · and with false sleithes,
Wolde neuere other-wise god · bote wicked men hit hadde,
As imparfit preestes · and prechers after seluer,
Secutours and sodenes · somners and here lemmannes;
And that with gyle was gete · vngraciousliche be dispended.

Curatours of holychurche · and clerkus that ben auarous,
Lightliche that thei leue · loseles hit deuouren.

Leyueth hit wel, lordes · bothe lered and lewede,
That thus goth here godes · atte laste ende,

C. 275. PE *insert* that *after* neuere. 279. auerous P. 280. deuouren EG; deuoren P.

In prayers and in penaunces · and in parfyt charite.'
'What is Charite?' quod I tho · 'a childissh thinge,' he seide;
'*Nisi efficiamini sicut paruuli, non intrabitis in regnum celorum;*
With-outen fauntelte or foly · a fre liberal wille.'
'Where shulde men fynde such a frende · with so fre an herte?
I haue lyued in londe,' quod I · 'my name is Longe Wille,
And fonde I neuere ful charite · bifore ne bihynde!
Men beth mercyable · to mendynantz and to pore,
And wolen lene there thei leue · lelly to ben payed.
Ac charite that Poule preyseth best · and most plesaunte to owre saueoure,
As, *non inflatur, non est ambiciosa, non querit que sua sunt,*
I seigh neuere such a man · so me god helpe,
That he ne wolde aske after his · and otherwhile coueyte
Thinge that neded hym nou3t · and nyme it if he my3te!
Clerkis kenne me that Cryst · is in alle places;
Ac I seygh hym neuere sothly · but as my-self in a miroure,
Ita in enigmate, tunc facie ad faciem.
And so I trowe trewly · by that men telleth of charite,
It is nought championes fy3te · ne chaffare, as I trowe.'
'Charite,' quod he, 'ne chaffareth nou3te · ne chalengeth, ne craueth.
As proude of a peny · as of a pounde of golde,
And is as gladde of a goune · of a graye russet
As of a tunicle of Tarse · or of trye scarlet.
He is gladde with alle gladde · and good tyl alle wykked,
And leueth and loueth alle · that owre lorde made.

Curseth he no creature · ne he can bere no wratthe,
Ne no lykynge hath to lye · ne laughe men to scorne.
Al that men seith, he let it soth · and in solace taketh,
And alle manere meschiefs · in myldenesse he suffreth;
Coueiteth he none erthly good · but heuene-riche blisse.'

B. 152. *inflatur* WCROB; *inflatus* L. L om. *est.* 157. *Ita* COB; *It* L. 164. tyl WCRO; ty L.

That lyuen a-ȝens holy lore · and the loue of charite.'

'Charite,' quath ich tho · 'that is a thing for sothe
That maistres comenden muche; · wher may hit be founde?
Ich haue lyued in London · meny longe ȝeres,
And founde ich neuere in faith · as freres hit precheth,
Charite, that chargeth nat · ne chit, thauh men greue hym,
As Paul in a pistele · of hym bereth witnesse;
Non inflatur, non est ambiciosa, non querit que sua sunt.
Ich knew neuere, by Cryst · clerk nother lewede,
That he ne askede after hus · and other-whyle coueytede
Thyng that neededе hym nat · and nyme hit, yf he myghte!
For thoȝ men soȝt al sectes · of sustren and of bretheren,
And thow fynde hym, bote figuratifliche · a ferly me thinketh;
Hic in enigmate, tunc facie ad faciem:—
And so ich trowe trewely · by that men tellen of Charite.'
'Charite is a childish thing · as holichurche wittnesseth,
Nisi efficiamini sicut paruuli, non intrabitis in regnum celorum:

DISTINCTIO CARITATIS.

As proud of a peny · as of a pounde of golde,
And al-so glad of a goune · of a grey russet
As of a cote of cammoka · other of clene scarlett.
He is glad with alle glade · as gurles that lauhen alle,
And sory when he seeth men sory · as thow seest children
Lauhen ther men lauhen · and loure ther men loureth.
And when a man swereth for soth · for soth he hit troweth;
He weneth that no wiȝt · wold lyghe and swere,
Ne that eny gome wolde gylen · other, ne greue,
For drede of god that is so good · and thus-gates ous techeth,
Quodcunque uultis ut uobis faciant homines, facite eis.
He hath no lykynge to lauhe · ne lyghe, men to scorne;
Alle siknesses and sorwes · for solas he hem taketh,
And alle manere meschifs · as minstracie of heuene.

C. 283. That MFT; And PE. 286. aue (*for* haue) P. lyuede P. london M; londoun F; lundoun T; londen PEG. 290. knew EMFG; knowe P. clek P. 293. *From* EMFGT; P *om. this line.* 294. thow M; thou F; PETG *om.* 296. *non—celorum* E. *Distinctio, &c.* M. 302. an (*for* and) P. 304. that MFT; nat PE. whiȝt P. 306. gatis T (*read* gates); PEMF *om.* 307. ne EMF; no P; ne to T. lyhe P (*see* l. 304). 308. hem MF; hit PET.

'Hath he any rentes or ricchesse · or any riche frendes?'
'Of rentes ne of ricchesse · ne reccheth he neuere.
For a frende that fyndeth hym · failled hym neuere at nede;
Fiat-voluntas tua · fynt hym euer-more.
And if he soupeth, eet but a soppe · of *spera-in-deo.*
He can purtreye wel the *pater-noster* · and peynte it with *aues,*
And other-while is his wone · to wende in pilgrymage,
There pore men and prisones liggeth · her pardoun to haue.
Though he bere hem no bred · he bereth hem swetter lyflode,
Loueth hem as owre lorde biddeth · and loketh how thei fare.
And whan he is wery of that werke · thanne wil he some tyme
Labory in a lauendrye . wel the lengthe of a myle,
And 3erne in-to 3outhe · and 3epliche speke
Pryde with al the appurtenaunce · and pakken hem togyderes,
And bouken hem at his brest · and beten hem clene,
And leggen on longe · with *laboraui-in-gemitu-meo,*
And with warme water at his eyghen · wasshen hem after.
And thanne he syngeth whan he doth so · and some tyme seith wepyng,
Cor contritum et humiliatum, deus, non despicies.'
'By Cryst, I wolde that I knewe hym,' quod I · 'no creature leuere!'
'With-outen helpe of Piers Plowman,' quod he · 'his persone seestow neuere.'
'Where clerkes knowen hym,' quod I · 'that kepen holykirke?'
'Clerkes haue no knowyng,' quod he · 'but by werkes and bi wordes.
Ac Piers the Plowman · parceyueth more depper
What is the wille and wherfore · that many wy3te suffreth,
Et vidit deus cogitaciones eorum.
For there are ful proude-herted men · paciente of tonge,
And boxome as of berynge · to burgeys and to lordes,
And to pore peple · han peper in the nose,
And as a lyoun he loketh · there men lakketh his werkes.
For there ar beggeres and bidderes · bedemen as it were,
Loketh as lambren · and semen lyf-holy,
Ac it is more to haue her mete · with such an esy manere,

B. 175. eet R; eteth W; ette L. 194. What W; That LR; Wher COB. 199. bedemen WROB; bedmen LC.

Of deth ne of derthe · drad was he neuere,
Ne mysliked, thauh he loore · other lenede to that ilke
That neuere payed peny a3e · in place there he borwede.'
'Who fyndeth hym his fode?' quath ich · 'other what frendes hath he,
Rentes other richesses · to releue hym at hus neode?'
'Of rentes ne of richesses,' quath he · 'reccheth he neuere,
A frend he hath that fynt him · that faileth him neuere.
On *Aperis-tu-manum* · alle thynge hym fyndeth;
Fiat-uoluntas-tua · festeth hym eche day.
And also he can clergie · *credo-in-deum-patrem*,
And portreieth wel the *pater-noster* · and peynteth hit with *auees*.
And other-while hus wone is · to wende in pilgrymages,
Ther poure men and prysouns beth · and payeth for here lyflode,
Clotheth hem and comforteth hem · and of Crist precheth hem,
What sorwes he suffrede · in ensample of ous alle,
That pouerte and pacience · parfitliche ytake
Ys muche merit to that man · that wel may suffren.
Whan he hath thus visited fetered folke · and other folke poure,
Then he 3erneth in-to thouht · and 3epliche he secheth
Pruyde, with alle the portinaunce · and packeth hem togederes,
And laueth hem in the lauandrie · *laboraui-in-gemitu-meo*,
And bouketh hem at hus brest · and beteth hit ofte,
And with warme water of hus eyen · woketh hit til hit white;
Lauabis me, et super niuem dealbabor.
Thanne syngeth he whanne he so doth · and som tyme wepynge,
Cor contritum et humiliatum, deus, non despicies.'
'Were ich with hym, by Crist,' quath ich · 'ich wolde neuere fro hym,
Thauh ich my by-lyue sholde begge · a-boute at menne hacches.
Wher clerkus knowe hym nat,' quath ich · 'that kepen holy-churche?'
'Peers the Plouman,' quath he · 'most parfitliche hym knoweth;
Et uidit deus cogitationes eorum.

C. 316. *From* MFTG; PE *om. this line.* 320. wel MFTG; PE *om.* 327. visetid P. 331. beeteth P. 332. wharme P. hit til hit M; hem til hit G; it til he F; hit he PT.

Than for penaunce and parfitnesse · the pouerte that such taketh.
There-fore by coloure ne by clergye · knowe shaltow hym neuere,
Noyther thorw wordes ne werkes · but thorw wille one.
And that knoweth no clerke · ne creature in erthe,
But Piers the Plowman · *Petrus, id est, Christus.*
For he ne is nou3te in lolleres · ne in lande-leperes hermytes,
Ne at ancres, there a box hangeth · alle suche thei faiten.
Fy on faitoures · and *in fautores suos!*
For charyte is goddis champioun · and as a good chylde hende,
And the meryest of mouth · at mete where he sitteth.
The loue that lith in his herte · maketh hym ly3te of speche,
And is companable and confortatyf · as Cryst bit hymselue,
Nolite fieri sicut ypocrite, tristes, etc.
For I haue seyn hym in sylke · aud somme tyme in russet,
Bothe in grey and in grys · and in gulte herneys,
And as gladlich he it gaf · to gomes that it neded.
Edmonde and Edwarde · eyther were kynges,
And seyntes ysette · tyl charite hem folwed.
I haue seyne Charite also · syngen and reden,
Ryden and rennen · in ragged wedes,
Ac biddyng as beggeres · bihelde I hym neuere.
Ac in riche robes · rathest he walketh,
Ycalled and ycrimiled · and his crowne shaue,
And clenlich yclothed · in cipres and in Tartaryne.
And in a freres frokke · he was yfounde ones,
Ac it is ferre agoo · in seynt Fraunceys tyme;
In that secte sitthe · to selde hath he be knowen.
Riche men he recomendeth · and of her robes taketh,
That with-outen wyles · leden her lyues,
Beatus est diues, qui, etc.
In kynges courte he cometh ofte · there the conseille is trewe,
Ac if coueityse be of the conseille · he wil nou3t come ther-inne.
In courte amonge Iaperes · he cometh but selde,
For braulyng and bakbytyng · and beryng of fals witnesse.
In the constorie bifor the comissarie · he cometh nou3t ful ofte,
For her lawe dureth ouer-longe · but if thei lacchen syluer;
And matrimoigne for monye · maken and vnmaken,

B. 213. companable RCO; compenable L. 224. *From* OCB; LWR *om. this line.*

By clothynge ne by karpinge · knowe shalt thou hym neuere,
Ac thorw werkes thou myght wite · wher forth he walketh;
Operibus credite.

He is the muriest of mouthe · at metes ther he sitteth,

And compenable in companye · as Crist hym-self techeth,
Nolite tristes fieri, sicut ypocrite.
Ich haue seyen hym my-self · som tyme in russett,
Bothe in greye and in grys · and in gylt harneys,
And al-so gladliche he gyueth · to gomes that hit needeth.
Eadmund and Edward · ayther were seyntes,
And chief charite with hem · and chast al here lyue.
Ich haue seyen Charite al-so · syngen and rede,
Ryden, and rennen · in raggede clothes,
Ac biddyng as a beggere · by-heold ich hym neuere.
Ac in riche robes · rathest he walketh,
Y-called and ycrymyled · and hus croune shaue.

And in a freres frocke · he was yfounde ones,
Ac it is fer and fele ȝeres · in Fraunceys tyme;
In that secte sitthe · to selde he hath be founde.
Riche men he comendeth · and of here robes taketh,
Of tho that leelliche lyuen · and louen and by-leyuen;
Beatus est dives sine macula.
In kynges court he cometh · yf hus counsail be trewe;
Ac yf couetise be of hus counsail · he wol nat come ther-ynne.
Among the comunes in court · he cometh but selde,
For brawelynge and bacbytynge · and beryng of false wittnesse.
In constorie by-fore the comissarie · he cometh nat ful ofte,
For here lawe is ouere-longe · bote yf thei lacche seluer.

C. 343. grys G; gris EFT; greys P. 352. a EMFTG; P *om.* 353 fer FTG; feer P. 359. selde EMTG; seilde P.

And that conscience and Cryst · hath yknitte faste,
Thei vndon it vnworthily · tho doctours of lawe.
Amonges erchebischopes and other bischopes · and prelates of holy cherche,
For to wonye with hem · his wone was sum tyme,
And Cristes patrimonye to the pore · parcel-mel dele.
Ac auerice hath the keyes now · and kepeth for his kynnesmen,
And for his seketoures and his seruants · and somme for here children.
Ac I ne lakke no lyf · but lorde, amende vs alle,
And gyue vs grace, good god · charite to folwe!
For who so myȝte mete with hym · such maneres hym eyleth,
Noyther he blameth ne banneth · bosteth, ne prayseth,
Lakketh, ne loseth · ne loketh vp sterne;
Craueth, ne coueiteth · ne crieth after more,
In pace in id-ipsum dormiam, etc.
The moste lyflode that he lyueth by · is loue in goddis passioun,
Noyther he biddeth, ne beggeth · ne borweth to ȝelde;
Misdoth he no man · ne with his mouth greueth.
Amonges Cristene men · this myldnesse shulde laste;
In alle manere angres · haue this at herte—
That though thei suffred al this · god suffred for vs more,
In ensample we shulde do so · and take no veniaunce
Of owre foes that doth vs falsenesse · that is owre fadres wille.
For wel may euery man wite · if god hadde wolde hymselue,
Sholde neuere Iudas ne Iuwe · haue Iesu don on rode,
Ne han martired Peter ne Poule · ne in prisoun holden.
Ac he suffred in ensample · that we shulde suffre also,
And seide to suche that suffre wolde · that *pacientes vincunt.*
Verbi gratia,' quod he · 'and verrey ensamples manye,
In *Legenda Sanctorum* · the lyf of holy seyntes,
What penaunce and pouerte · and passioun thei suffred,
In hunger, in hete · in al manere angres.
Antony and Egidie · and other holi fadres
Woneden in wildernesse · amonge wilde bestes;
Monkes and mendynauntz · men bi hem-selue,
In spekes and in spelonkes · selden speken togideres.
Ac noyther Antony ne Egidy · ne hermite that tyme

B. 239–243.—*These lines are in* R *only.* 270. an (*for* and) L.

With bisshopes he wolde beo · for beggers sake,
Ac auarice other-whiles · halt hym with-oute the gate.
Kynges and cardineles · knowen hym som tyme,
Ac thorw couetise and his consail · congeied is he ofte.
And ho so coueyteth to know hym · such a kynde hym folweth,
As ich tolde the with tonge · a lytel tyme passed;
For nother he beggeth, ne biddeth · ne borweth to ȝelde;
He halt hit a nycete · and a foul shame
To beggen other to borwe · bote of god one;
Panem nostrum cotidianum da nobis hodie.'

Hic explicit passus septimus et ultimus de Dowel.

PASSUS XVIII.

Incipit passus primus de Dobet.

'THER is no suche,' ich seide · 'that som tyme ne borweth,
Other beggeth other byddeth · beo he ryche other poure,
And ȝut other-while wroth · with-oute eny synne.'
'Ho so is wroth and wolde be awreke · holi wryt,' quath he,
'proueth
He passeth chief charite · if holichurche beo trewe;
Caritas omnia suffert.
Holy writ witnesseth · ther were suche eremites,
Solitarie by hem-self · and in here selles lyueden
With-oute borwynge other beggynge · bote of god one;

C. 364. auerice P. 367. a MFT; P *om.* 370. a nycete P; T *has* for a vice (*which seems better*). 371. *da—hodie* F (*only*).
Passus XVIII. 5. hif P. trywe P. 6. whitnesseþ P.

Of liouns ne of leoperdes · no lyflode ne toke,
But of foules that fleeth · thus fynt men in bokes.
Excepte that Egydie · after an hynde cryede,
And thorw the mylke of that mylde best · the man was susteyned;
And day by day had he hir nouȝt · his hunger forto slake,
But selden and sondrie tymes · as seith the boke and techeth.
Antony a dayes · aboute none-tyme,
Had a bridde that brouȝte hym bred · that he by lyued;
And though the gome hadde a geste · god fonde hem bothe.
Poule *primus heremita* · had parroked hym-selue,
That no man miȝte hym se · for mosse and for leues;
Foules hym fedde · fele wynteres with alle,
Til he founded freres · of Austines ordre.
Poule, after his prechyng · panyers he made,
And wan with his hondes · that his wombe neded.
Peter fisched for his fode · and his felawe Andrewe;
Some thei solde and some thei sothe · and so thei lyued bothe.
And also Marie Magdeleyne · by mores lyued and dewes,
Ac moste thorw deuocioun · and mynde of god almiȝty.
I shulde nouȝt this seuene dayes · seggen hem alle,
That lyueden thus for owre lordes loue · manye longe ȝeres.
Ac there ne was lyoun ne leopart · that on laundes wenten,
Noyther bere, ne bor · ne other best wilde,
That ne fel to her feet · and fauned with the tailles.
And if thei couth han ycarped · by Cryst, as I trowe,
Thei wolde haue fedde that folke · bifor wilde foules.
For alle the curteisie that bestes kunne · thei kidde that folke ofte
In likkyng and in lowynge · there thei on laundes ȝede.
Ac god sent hem fode bi foules · and by no fierse bestes,
In menynge that meke thinge · mylde thinge shulde fede;
As who seith, religious · ryȝtful men shulde fynde,
And lawful men to lyf-holy men · lyflode brynge.

B. 276. And L; Ac R (*perhaps better*). 298, 299. *These lines are in* R *only.*

Excepte that Egidie · an hynde other-while
To hus selle selde cam · and suffrede to be melked.
Elles fouweles fedden hem · in frythes ther thei woneden,
Bothe Antonye and Erseny · and other mo fele.
Paul *primus heremita* · hadde parroked hym-selue,
That no man myghte se hym · for muche mos and leues;
Foweles hym fedde · yf frere Austyn be trewe;
For he ordeynede that ordre · other elles thei gabben.
Paul after his prechynge · panyeres he made,
And wan with hus hondes · al that hym neodyde.
Peter fysshed for hus fode · and hus fere Andreu;
Som thei solde, and som thei sode · and so thei leueden bothe.
Marie Magdalene · by mores leuede and dewes;
Loue and leel by-leyue · heeld lyf and soule to-gedere.
Maria Egyptiaca · eet in thyrty wynter
Bote thre ȝtel loues · and loue was her souel.
Ich can nat rekene hem ryght now · ne reherce here names,
That lyueden thus for oure lordes loude · meny longe ȝeres,
With-oute borwyng other beggyng · other the bok lyeth,
And woneden in wildernesse · a-mong wilde bestes;
Ac dorst no best byten hem · by daye ne by nyghte,
Bote myldeliche, whan thei metten · maden louh chere,
And feyre by-fore tho men · fauhnede with the tayles.
Ac bestes brouhte hem no mete · bot onliche the fouweles,
In tokenynge that trewe man · alle tymes sholde
Fynde honeste men and holy men · and other ryghtful peuple.
For wolde neuere feithful god · that freres and monkes token
Lyflode of luther wynnynges · in al here lif-tyme.
As wytnesseth holy writ · what Thobie seyde
To his wif, whan he was blynde · he herde a lamb blete;
'A! wyf! be war,' quath he · 'what ȝe haue here-ynne;
Lord leyue,' quath the lede · 'no stole thyng be here!'
Videte ne furtum sit: et alibi, melius est mori quam male uiuere.
This is no more to mene · bote men of holychurche
Sholde receyue ryght nauȝt · bot that ryght wolde,

C. 10. selde EMTG; seilde P. 16. gabben EMTG; gabbyn P. 17. is (*for* his) P. 30. chere EMT; chire P. 34. (*1st*) and MFTG; in PE. 35. god EMTGF; goud P. 37. writt P. 38. is (*for* his) P. he MFTG; PE *om.* 42. nauȝt MFT; nauth P.

And thanne wolde lordes and ladyes · be loth to agulte,
And to take of her tenauntz · more than treuth wolde,
Fonde thei that freres · wolde forsake her almesses,
And bidden hem bere it · there it was yborwed.
For we ben goddes foules · and abiden alwey,
Tyl briddes brynge vs · that we shulde lyue by.
For had ȝe potage and payn ynough · and peny-ale to drynke,
And a messe there-mydde · of o manere kynde,
ȝe had riȝt ynough, ȝe religious · and so ȝowre reule me tolde:

Nunquam, dicit Iob, rugiet onager cum herbam habuerit? aut mugiet bos cum ante plenum presepe steterit?
Brutorum animalium natura te condempnat, quia cum eis pabulum commune sufficiat; ex adipe prodijt iniquitas tua.

If lewed men knewe this Latyn · thei wolde loke whom thei ȝeue,
And auyse hem bifore · a fyue dayes or sexe,
Or thei amortesed to monkes · or chanouns her rentes.
Allas! lordes and ladyes · lewed conseille haue ȝe
To ȝyue fram ȝowre eyres · that ȝowre ayeles ȝow lefte,
And ȝiueth to bidde for ȝow · to such that ben riche,
And ben founded and feffed eke · to bidde for other.
Who perfourneth this prophecye · of the peple that now lybbeth,

Dispersit, dedit pauperibus, etc.?

If any peple perfourme that texte · it ar this pore freres!
For that thei beggen abouten · in buildynge thei spene,
And on hem-self sum · and such as ben her laboreres,
And of hem that habbeth thei taken · and ȝyue hem that ne habbeth.
Ac clerkes and knyȝtes · and comuneres that ben riche,
Fele of ȝow fareth · as if I a forest hadde,
That were ful of faire trees · and I fonded and caste
How I myȝte mo ther-inne · amonges hem sette.
Riȝt so, ȝe riche · ȝe robeth that ben riche,
And helpeth hem that helpeth ȝow · and ȝiueth there no nede is.
As who so filled a tonne · of a fresshe ryuer,
And went forth with that water · to woke with Themese,
Riȝt so, ȝe riche · ȝe robeth and fedeth
Hem that han as ȝe han; · hem ȝe make at ese.
Ac religious that riche ben · shulde rather feste beggeres
Than burgeys that riche ben · as the boke techeth;

B. 312. *onerger* (*by mistake*) L.

And refuse reuerences · and raueneres offrynges.
Thenne wolde lordes and ladies · be loth for to agulte,
And to take of here tenauns · more than treuthe wolde;
And marchauns merciable wolde be · and men of lawe bothe.
Wolde religiouse refuse · raueneres almesse,
Then grace sholde growe ȝut · and grene-leued wexe,
And Charite, that child is now · sholde chaufen of him-self,
And confortye alle Cristene · wold holykirke amende.
Iob the parfit patriark · this prouerbe wrot and tauhte,
To makye a man louye mesure · that monkes beeth and freres;

Nunquam, dicit Iob, rugiet onager cum habuerit herbam, aut mugiet bos cum ante plenum presepe steterit? Brutorum animalium natura te condempnat, quia cum pabulum sufficiat commune, ex adipe prodiit iniquitas.

Yf lewede men knewe this Latyn · a litel thei wolde auisen hem
Er thei amorteisede eny more · for monkes other for chanons.
Alas! lordes and ladies · lewede counsail haue ȝe
That founded beth to fulle · to feffe suche and fede
With that ȝoure barnes and ȝo̅ure blod · by goode lawe may cleyme!
For god bad hus blessede · as the book techeth,

Honora patrem et matrem, ut longeuus sis, etc.,

To helpe thy fader formest · by-fore freres and monkes,
And er prestes other pardoneres · other eny peuple elles.
Help thi kynne, Crist bit · for ther by-gynneth charite,
And afterwarde awaite · hoo hath moost neede,
And ther help yf thou hast · and that halde ich charite.

Loo! Laurence for hus largenesse! · as holy lore telleth,
That hus mede and hus man-hede · for euere-more shal laste;

Iusticia eius manet in eternum.

He gaf godes men godes goodes · and nat to grete lordes,
And fedde that a-fyngred were · and in defaute lyueden.
Ich dar nat carpe of clerkes now · that Cristes tresoure kepen,
That poure peuple by pure ryght · here part thei myghten aske;
Of that that holychurche · of the olde lawe cleymeth,
Priestes on aparail · and on Purnele spenen.

C. 49. him MF; he*m* PETG. 50. kirke T; churche PEFG. 55. ȝe MFTG; we P. 58. *ut—&c.* is in F only. 62. awhaite P. 66. (*2nd*) godes MG; goddes I; godis T; PE *om.* 68. dar IMFTG; der P. 70. þat þat MFITG; þat PE.

Quia sacrilegium est res pauperum non pauperibus dare.
Item, peccatoribus dare, est demonibus immolare.
Item, monache, si indiges et accipis, pocius das quam accipis.
Si autem non eges, et accipis, rapis.
Porro, non indiget monachus, si habeat quod nature sufficit.

For-thi I conseille alle Cristene · to confourmen hem to charite;
For charite with-oute chalengynge · vnchargeth the soule,
And many a prisone fram purgatorie · thorw his preyeres he delyuereth.
Ac there is a defaute in the folke · that the faith kepeth;
Wherefore folke is the feblere · and nou3t ferme of bilieue.
As in Lussheborwes is a lyther alay · and 3et loketh he lyke a sterlynge,
The merke of that mone is good · ac the metal is fieble;
And so it fareth by some folke now · thei han a faire speche,
Croune and Crystendome · the kynges merke of heuene,
Ac the metal, that is mannes soule · with synne is foule alayed;
Bothe lettred and lewede · beth allayed now with synne,
That no lyf loueth other · ne owre lorde, as it semeth.
For thorw werre and wykked werkes · and wederes vnresonable,
Wederwise shipmen · and witti clerkes also
Han no bilieue to the lifte · ne to the lore of philosofres.
Astrymyanes alday · in her arte faillen,
That whilum warned bifore · what shulde falle after.
Shipmen and shepherdes · that with shipp and shepe wenten,
Wisten by the walkene · what shulde bityde;
As of wederes and wyndes · thei warned men ofte.
Tilieres that tiled the erthe · tolden her maistres,
By the sede that thei sewe · what thei selle mi3te,
And what to lene and what to lyue by · the londe was so trewe.
Now failleth the folke of the flode · and of the londe bothe,
Shepherdes and shipmen · and so do this tilieres;
Noither thei kunneth ne knoweth · one cours bi-for another.
Astrymyanes also · aren at her wittes ende;
Of that was calculed of the element · the contrarie thei fynde.

B. 339. delyuereth WOB; delyureth L. 354. sheperdes L. 359. what WCOB; LR *om.* 361. Sheperdes L.

Men may lykne letterid men · to a Lussheborgh, other werse,
And to a badde peny · with a good preynte.
For of muche moneye · the metal is ryght naught,
ȝut is the prente pure trewe · and parfitliche graue.
And so it fareth by false Cristine · here follouht is trewe,
Cristendome of holykirke · the kynges marke of heuene;
Ac the metal, that is mannes saule · of meny of these techeres
Is alayed with lecherie · and other lustes of synne,
That god coueiteth nat the coygne · that Crist hym-self prentede;
And for synne of the soule · for-saketh hus owne coygne.
Thus are the lithere lykned · to Lussheborue sterlinges,
That faire by-fore folke · prechen and techen,
And worchen nat as thei fynden wryten · and wissen the peuple.
For what thorw werre and wrake · and wycked hyfdes,
May no preiour pees make · in no place, hit semeth;
Lewede men hauen no by-leyue · so letterid men erren.
Neither the see ne the sande · ne the seed ȝeldeth
As thei woned were; · in wham is defaute?
Nat in god, that he nys good · and the grounde bothe;
And the see and the seed · the sonne and the mone
Don her deuer day and nyȝt · and yf we duden also,
Ther sholde be plente and pees · perpetuel for euere.
Wederwise shupmen now · and other witty peuple
Han no by-leyue to the lyft · ne to the lood-sterre.
Astronomyens al day · in here art faillen,
That whilom warned men by-fore · what shoulde by-falle after.
Shupmen and shephurdes · by the seuen sterres
Wisten while and tolden · whenne hit shoulde reynen.
Tyliers that tyleden the erthe · tolden here maystres
By the seed that thei sewe · what thei shoulde notye,
And what lyue by and lene · the londe was so trewe.
Now failleth this folke · bothe sowers and shupmen,
Nother thei knoweth ne conneth · o cours by a-nother.
Astronomyens al-so · aren at here wittes end;
Of that was calculed of the clymat · the contrarye they fyndeth.

C. 72. luhssheborgh P. 75. an P. 76. triwe P. 77. kirke I; churche PEFG. 80. þe EMIFTG; þat P. preentede P. 81. þe EMIFTG; P *om.* 82. luhssheborue P. 90. good IMFT; goud P. 92. nyȝth P. 94. Wederwise I; Wonderwyse PEMFGT. 95. loodsterres P. 97. whilom IFTG; whilen PE. 102. whas P.

Gramer, the grounde of al · bigyleth now children;
For is none of this newe clerkes · who so nymeth hede,
That can versifye faire · ne formalich enditen;
Ne nou3t on amonge an hundreth · that an auctour can construe,
Ne rede a lettre in any langage · but in Latyn or in Englissh.
Go now to any degre · and but-if Gyle be mayster,
And Flaterere his felawe · vnder hym to fourmen,
Moche wonder me thynketh · amonges vs alle.
Doctoures of decres · and of diuinite maistres,
That shulde konne and knowe · alkynnes clergye,
And answere to argumentz · and also to a *quodlibet*,
(I dar nou3t seggen it for shame) · if suche weren apposed,
Thei shulde faillen in her philosofye · and in phisyk bothe.
Wher-fore I am afered · of folke of holikirke,
Lest thei ouerhuppen as other don · in offices and in houres.
Ac if thei ouerhuppe, as I hope nou3te · owre byleue suffiseth;
As clerkes in *Corpus-Christi* feste · singen and reden,
That *sola fides sufficit* · to saue with lewed peple.

Grammere, that grounde is of alle · by-gyleth now children;
For ther is nouthe non · who so nymeth hede,
That can versifie fayre · other formeliche endite,
Ne that can construen kyndeliche · that poetes maden.
Gowe now to eny degre · and, bote Gyle be halde a mayster,
And a flaterer for hus usshere · a ferliche me thynketh!
Doctours of decree · and of dyuyn maystres,
That shoulde the seuene ars conne · and a-soile *ad quodlibet*,
Bote thei faille in fylosophye ·—and filosophers lyueden,
And wolde wel examene hem—· wonder me thynketh!
Lord leyue that these preestes · leelly seyn here masses,
That thei ouerhuppe nat for hast! · as ich hope thei do nat,
Thogh hit suffise for oure sauacion · sothfast by-leyue;
As clerkus in *Corpus-Christi* feste · syngen and reden,
That *sola fides sufficit* · to saue with lewede peuple.
Ac yf preestes do her deuer wel · we shullen do the bettere.
For Saresyns mowe be saued so · yf thei so by-leyuede,
In the lengthynge of here lyf · to leyue on holychurche.'
'What is holychurche, frend?' quoth ich · 'Charite,' he seyde,
'Lyf, and Loue, and Leaute · in o by-leyue and lawe,
A loue-knotte of leaute · and of leel by-leyue,
Alle kynne cristene · cleuynge on o wyl,
With-oute gyle and gabbynge · gyue and selle and lene.
Loue lawe with-oute leaute · lowable was it neuere;
God lereth no lyf to loue · with-oute leel cause:
Iewes, Gentiles, and Sarrasines · Iugen hem-selue
That leeliche thei by-leyuen · and ȝut here lawe dyuerseth;
And on god that al by-gan · with goode herte thei honoureth,
And either loueth, and bileuith · in on lord al-myȝti.
Ac oure lorde loueth no loue · bote lawe be the cause;
For lechours louen aȝen the lawe · and at the laste beeth dampned:
And theeues louen, and leaute haten · and at the laste beeth hanged:

C. 108. hede EMIT; hete P. 109. versifie IFT; uersie P. 112. hus-shere P. a FT; and PEI; MG *om.* 116. *This line is supplied from* M. PEIFTG *omit.* 119. þogh I; þoȝ E; þowh F; þhaw M; That P. suffise EFT; suffice IG; suffuse P. 126. (*3rd*) and M; & oo F; a PEIG. 127. A—knotte MFITG; And loue a knotte PE. 128. clyuynge P. 133. dyuerseþ EMIFTG; dyuersen P. 135. *This line is from* M; *also in* IFGT; PE *om.* 138. louen and T; louyen and I; PEMFG *om.*; *cf.* ll. 137, 139.

And so may Sarasenes be saued · scribes and Jewes;
Allas thanne! but owre loresmen · lyuen as thei leren vs,
And, for her lyuynge, that lewed men · be the lother god agulten.
For Sarasenes han somwhat · semynge to owre bileue,
For thei loue and bileue · in o persone almi3ty;
And we, lered and lewede · in on god bileueth.
Ac one Makometh, a man · in mysbileue
Brou3te Sarasenes of Surre · and se in what manere.

B. 388. *After this* R *adds a line, which seems superfluous*—Cristene and vncristene · on one god bileueth.

And leelle men louen as lawe techeth · and loue ther-of aryseth,
The which is hefd of Charite · and hele of mannes soule.
Dilige deum propter deum; id propter ueritatem est. Et inimicum tuum propter mandatum; id propter legem est. Et amicum propter amorem; id est, propter caritatem.
Loue god, for he is good · and grounde of alle treuthe;
Loue thyn enemy entyerly · godes heste to ful-fille;
Loue thy frend that folweth thy wil · that is thy faire soule.
For whanne alle frendes faillen · and fleen a-wey in deiynge,
Then suweth the thy soule · to sorwe other to ioye,
And ay hopeth eft to be · with here bodye atte laste
In murthe other in mornynge · and neuere eft to departe.
And that is Charite, my leue childe · to be cher ouer thi soule;
Contrarie hure nauht, as in conscience · yf thou wolt come to heuene.'
'Wher Sarrasyns,' ich seyde · 'seo nat what is charite?'
'Hit may be that Sarrasyns hauen · a suche manere charite,
Louye, as by lawe of kynde · oure lord god al-myghty.
Hit is a kynde thyng, a creature · hus creatour to honoure;
For ther is no man that mynde hath · that ne meoketh hym and by-secheth
To that lord that hym lyf lente · and lyflode him sendeth.
Ac meny manere men ther beoth · as Sarrasyns and Iewes,
Louyeth nat that lorde a-ryght · as by the Legende *Sanctorum*,
And lyuen oute of leel by-leyue · for thei leyue in a mene.
A man that hihte Makamede · for Messye thei hym heolde,
And after hus lerynge thei lyuen · and by lawe of kynde.
And when kynde hath hus cours · and no contrarye fyndeth,
Thenne is lawe lost · and lewete vnknowen.
Beaute saunz bounte · blessed was hit neuere,
Ne kynde *saunz cortesie* · in no contreye preysed.
Men fyndeth that Makamede · was a man ycrystned,
And a cardinal of court · a gret clerk with-alle,
And porsuede to haue be pope · pryns of holychurche;
And for he was lyke a Lussheborgh · ich leyue oure lord hym lette.

C. 143. (*3rd*) þy EIG; þi MFT; þe P. 150. Wher (*for* wheþer); *written* Where IG; Whare F; Were P; Wheþer ET. 155. sendeþ EMFG; seyndeþ P. 162. vnknowyn P. 168. whas P. louhssheborgh P.

This Makometh was a Crystene man · and for he moste nou3te
be a pope,
In-to Surre he sou3te · and thorw his sotil wittes
Daunted a dowue · and day and ny3te hir fedde;
The corne that she cropped · he caste it in his ere.
And if he amonge the people preched · or in places come,
Thanne wolde the coluer come · to the clerkes ere,
Menynge as after meet · thus Makometh hir enchaunted,
And dide folke thanne falle on knees · for he swore in his
prechynge,
That the coluer that come so · come fram god of heuene
As messager to Makometh · men forto teche
And thus thorw wyles of his witte · and a whyte dowue,
Makometh in mysbileue · men and wommen brou3te,
That lered there and lewed 3it · lyuen on his lawes.
And sitth owre saueoure suffred · the Sarasenes so bigiled,
Thorw a crystene clerke · acursed in his soule;
Ac for drede of the deth · I dar nou3t telle treuthe,
How Englissh clerkes a coluer feden · that Coueityse hatte,
And ben manered after Makometh · that no man vseth treuth.
Ancres and hermytes · and monkes and freres
Peren to apostles · thorw her parfit lyuynge.
Wolde neuere the faithful fader · that his ministres sholde
Of tyrauntz that teneth trewe men · taken any almesse,
But done as Antony did · Dominik and Fraunceys,
Benet and Bernarde · the which hem firste tau3te
To lyue bi litel and in lowe houses · by lele mennes almesse.
Grace sholde growe and be grene · thorw her good lyuynge,
And folkes sholde fynde · that ben in dyuerse sykenesse,
The better for her byddynges · in body and in soule.
Her preyeres and her penaunces · to pees shulde brynge
Alle that ben at debate · and bedemen were trewe;
Petite et accipietis, etc.
Salt saueth catel · seggen this wyues;
Vos estis sal terre, etc.
The heuedes of holicherche · and thei holy were,
Cryst calleth hem salt · for Crystene soules;
Et si sal euanuerit, in quo salietur.

B. 398. A (*for* And) L. 411. ministres WC; minstres LR.

For-thi souhte he in-to Surrye · and sotiled hou he myghte
Beo mayster ouer alle tho men · and on this manere wroughte.
He endauntede a douue · day and nyght here fedde;
In aither of hus eris · pryueliche he hadde
Corn, that the coluer eet · when he cam in places.
And in what place he prechede · and the peuple tauhte,
Then sholde the coluere come · to the clerkes ere,
Menynge as after mete · thus Makamede here enchauntede.
And whan the coluer kam thus · thenne knelede the peuple,
For Makemede to men swor · 'hit was a messager of heuene,
And sothly god self · in suche a coluere lyknesse
Tolde hym and tauhte hym · hou to teche the peuple.'
Thus Makamede in mysbyleyue · man and womman brouhte,
And in hus lore thei leyuen ȝut · as wel lered as lewede.
And sutthe oure sauyour suffrede · suche a fals Crystine
Deceyue so Sarrasyns · sothly me thynketh,
Holy men, as ich hope · thorw help of the holy gost,
Sholde conuerten hem to Crist · and Cristendom to take.

C. 169. southte P. sotiled I; sotilide T; sotelede G; sotelde M; sotile (*wrongly*) PE. 176. hus mete PE; *but* MIT *om.* hus. 177. knelede MIT; kneled F; knewele P. 186. (*2nd*) to IMFT; PEG *om.*

Ac fresshe flesshe other fisshe · whan it salt failleth,
It is vnsauory, for soth · ysothe or ybake.
So is mannes soule sothly · that seeth no good ensaumple
Of hem of holycherche · that the heigh weye shulde teche,
And be gyde, and go bifore · as a good baneoure,
And hardy hem that bihynde ben · and ȝiue hem good euydence.
Elleuene holy men · al the worlde torned
In-to lele byleue; · the liȝtloker, me thynketh,
Shulde al maner men · we han so manye maistres,
Prestes and prechoures · and a pope aboue,
That goddes salt shulde be · to saue mannes soule.
Al was hethenesse some tyme · Ingelond and Wales,
Til Gregory gerte clerkes · to go here and preche.
Austyn at Caunterbury · crystened the kynge,
And thorw myracles, as men may rede · al that marche he torned
To Cryst and to Crystendome · and crosse to honoure,
And fulled folke faste · and the faith tauȝte
More thorw miracles · than thorw moche prechynge,
As wel thorw his werkes · as with his holy wordes,
And seyde hem what fullynge · and faith was to mene.
Cloth that cometh fro the weuyng · is nouȝt comly to were,
Tyl it is fulled vnder fote · or in fullyng-stokkes,
Wasshen wel with water · and with taseles cracched,
Ytouked, and ytented · and vnder tailloures hande.
And so it fareth by a barne · that borne is of wombe,
Til it be crystened in Crystes name · and confermed of the bisshop,
It is hethene as to heueneward · and helpelees to the soule.
Hethene is to mene after heth · and vntiled erthe;
As in wilde wildernesse · wexeth wilde bestes,
Rude and vnresonable · rennenge with-out croperes.
ȝe mynnen wel how Matheu seith · how a man made a feste:
He fedde hem with no venysoun · ne fesauntes ybake,
But with foules that fram hym nolde · but folwed his whistellynge;
Ecce altilia mea et omnia parata sunt, etc.;
And wyth calues flesshe he fedde · the folke that he loued.
The calfe bytokeneth clennesse · in hem that kepeth lawes.
For as the cow thorw kynde mylke · the calf norissheth til an oxe,

B. 453. croperes C; croperis B; cropers O; cropiers W; creperes L. 454. mynnen W; menen O; nymmen L (*wrongly*).

[*Not in* C-*Text.*]

So loue and lewte · lele men susteyneth,
And maydenes and mylde men · mercy desiren;
Riȝt as the cow-calf · coueyteth swete mylke,
So don riȝtful men · mercy and treuthe.
[And by the hande-fedde foules · his folk vnderstonde,
That loth ben to louye · with-outen lernynge of ensaumples.
Riȝt as capones in a court · cometh to mennes whistlynge,
In menynge after mete · folweth men that whistlen,
Riȝt so rude men · that litel reson cunneth,
Louen and by-leuen · by lettred mennes doynges,
And by here wordes and werkes · wenen and trowen.
And, as tho foules to fynde · fode after whistlynge,
So hope thei to haue · heuene thoruȝ her whistlynge.
And by the man that made the feste · the mageste bymeneth;
That is, god of his grace · gyueth al men blisse;
With wederes and with wondres · he warneth vs with a whistlere,
Where that his wille is · to worschipen vs alle,
And feden vs and festen vs · for euere-more at ones.]
Ac who beth that excuseth hem · that aren persounes and prestes,
That heuedes of holycherche ben · that han her wille here,
With-oute trauaille, the tithe del · that trewemen biswynkyn,
Thei wil be wroth for I write thus · ac to witnesse I take
Bothe Mathew and Marke · and *Memento-domine-Dauid;*
Ecce audiuimus eam in Effrata, etc.
What pope or prelate now · perfourneth that Cryst hiȝte,
Ite in vniversum mundum et predicate, etc.?
Allas! that men so longe · on Makometh shulde byleue,
So many prelates to preche · as the pope maketh,
Of Nazareth, of Nynyue · of Neptalim, and Damaske,
That thei ne went as Cryst wisseth · sithen thei wilne a name,
To be pastours and preche · the passioun of Iesus,
And as hym-self seyde · so to lyue and deye;
Bonus pastor animam suam ponit, etc.;
And seyde it in sauacioun · of Sarasenes and other.
For Crystene and vncristene · Cryst seide to prechoures,
Ite vos in vineam meam.

B. 460. L *repeats* and. 464–477. *These lines are in* R *only.* 482. *Ecce—Effrata* in R only. 487. wilne a R; wil a L; wille haue W; wol haue C; wolen haue OB; *but* R *is right.*

Alas! that men so longe · on Makamede by-leyuen,
So meny prelates to preche · as the pope maketh,
Of Nazareth, of Nynyve · of Neptalym, of Damaske,
That thei ne wendeth the wey · as holy writ biddeth,
Ite in universum mundum · sutthe ȝe wilneth the name
To be prelates, and preche · the passion of Iesus,
And as hym-self seyde · so lyue and deye;
Bonus pastor animam suam ponit pro ouibus suis.

C. 188. prelates IFTG; priestes PE. pope EMIFTG; peuple (!) P. 190. biddith P.

And sith that this Sarasenes · scribes, and Iuwes
Han a lippe of owre byleue · the liȝtloker, me thynketh,
Thei shulde torne, who so trauaille wolde · to teche hem of the trinite,
Querite et inuenietis, etc.
It is reuth to rede · how riȝtwis men lyued,
How thei defouled her flessh · forsoke her owne wille,
Fer fro kitth and fro kynne · yuel-yclothed ȝeden,
Badly ybedded · no boke but conscience,
Ne no richchesse but the rode · to reioyse hem inne;
Absit nobis gloriari, nisi in cruce domini nostri, etc.
And tho was plente and pees · amonges pore and riche;
And now is routhe to rede · how the red noble
Is reuerenced or the rode · receyued for the worthier
Than Crystes crosse, that ouer-cam · deth and dedly synne!
And now is werre and wo · and who so 'why' axeth,
For coueityse after crosse · the croune stant in golde.
Bothe riche and religious · that rode thei honoure,
That in grotes is ygraue · and in golde nobles.
For coueityse of that crosse · men of holykirke
Shul tourne as Templeres did · the tyme approcheth faste.
Wyte ȝe nouȝt, wyse men · how tho men honoured
More tresore than treuthe? · I dar nouȝt telle the sothe;
Resoun and riȝtful dome · tho religious demed.
Riȝt so, ȝe clerkes · for ȝowre coueityse, ar longe,
Shal thei demen *dos ecclesie* · and ȝowre pryde depose;
Deposuit potentes de sede, etc.
ȝif knyȝthod and kynde wytte · and comune conscience
Togideres loue lelly · leueth it wel, ȝe bisshopes,
The lordeship of londes · for euere shal ȝe lese,
And lyuen as *Leuitici* · as owre lorde ȝow techeth,
Per primicias et decimas.
Whan Costantyn of curteysye · holykirke dowed
With londes and ledes · lordeshipes and rentes,
An angel men herde · an heigh at Rome crye,
'*Dos ecclesie* this day · hath ydronke venym,
And tho that han Petres powere · arn apoysoned alle.'
A medecyne mote ther-to · that may amende prelates,
That sholden preye for the pees; · possessioun hem letteth,

Hit is reuthe to rede · hou ryght holy men lyueden,
How thei defouleden here fleessh · for-soken here owen wil,
Fer fro kuth and fro kyn · vuel-clothed ȝeoden,
Baddeliche beddyd · no book bote here conscience,
Nother richesse bote the rode · to reioysen hem inne;
Absit nobis gloriari nisi in cruce domini nostri Iesu Christi.
And tho was pees and plente · a-mong poure and riche;
And now is reuthe to rede · hou the rede noble
Ys yreuerenced by-fore the rode · and receyuyd for the worthier
To a-mende and to make · as with men of holichurche,
Than Cryst, other croys that ouercam · deth and dedly synne!
And now is werre and wo · and ho so 'whi' asketh,
For couetyse after a croys · the croune stant in golde.
Bothe riche and religiouse · that rode thei honouren
That in grǫtes is y-graue · and in gold nobles.
For couetyse of that croys · clerkes of holychurche
Schullen ouerturne as Templers duden · the tyme aprocheth faste.
Mynne ȝe nat, lettered men · hou tho men honourede
More tresour than treuthe? · ich dar nat telle the sothe
How tho corsede Crystine · catel and richesse worshepeden;
Reyson and riȝtful dome · the religious damnede.
Right so, ȝe clerkus, ȝoure couetise · er come ouht longe,
Shal dampne *dos ecclesie* · and depose ȝow for ȝoure pruyde;
Deposuit potentes de sede.
Yf knyȝt-hod and kynde wit · and the comune and conscience
To-gederes louen leelliche · leyueth hit wel, bisshopes,
The lordshup of londes · leese ȝe shulle for euere,
And lyuen as *Leuitici* dude · and as our lord ȝow techeth,
Per primicias et decimas.
Whenne Constantyn of hus cortesye · holykirke dowede
With londes and leedes · lordshepes and rentes,
An angel men hurde · an hih at Rome crye—
'*Dos ecclesie* this day · hath ydronke venym,
And tho that han Petres power · aren poysoned alle.'
A medecine moste ther-to · that myghte amende the prelates,
That sholden preye for the pees · and possession hem letteth;

C. 196. Feer P. 198. reioyesen P. *nobis* IG; *vobis* T; *nos* PEM. 211. þan IMETG; P *om.* 213. relious (*for* religious) P. 216. Hyf (*for* Yf) P. knyȝtht P. whit (*for* wit) P. 218. þe EMITG; To (*wrongly*) P. 220. kirke IT; churche PEFG.

Take her landes, ȝe lordes · and let hem lyue by dymes.

If possessioun be poysoun · and inparfit hem make,

Good were to dischargen hem · for holicherche sake,
And purgen hem of poysoun · or more perile falle.
ȝif presthod were parfit · the peple sholde amende,
That contrarien Crystes lawe · and Crystendome dispise.

For al paynymes prayeth · and parfitly bileueth
In the holy grete god · and his grace thei asken,
And make her mone to Makometh · her message to shewe.

B. 530. solde (*for* sholde) L. 532. paynymes WCROB; paynym L.

Taketh here londes, ȝe lordes · and leet hem lyue by dymes,
Yf ȝe kynges coueyten · in Cristene pees to lyuen.
For yf posession be poyson · and inparfyt hem make,
The heuedes of holychurche · and tho that be vnder hem,
Hit were charite to deschargen hem · for holychurches sake,
And purge hem of the olde poyson · ere more perel falle.
For were preest-hod more parfyt · that is, the pope formest,
That with moneye menteyneth men · to werren vp-on cristine,
A-ȝens the lore of oure lorde · as seynt Luk wytnesseth,
Michi uindictam, et ego retribuam, dicit dominus, &c.,
Hus prayers with hus pacience · to pees sholde brynge
Alle londes to loue · and that in a lytel tyme;
The pope with alle preestes · *pax-uobis* sholde make!
And take hede hou Makamede · thorwe a mylde doue,
He hald al Surrye as hym-self wolde · and Sarasyns in quyete;
Nouht thorw manslauht and mannes strengthe · Makamede hadde the mastrie,
Bote thorw pacience and pryuy gyle · he was prynce ouer hem alle.
In suche manere, me thynketh · moste the pope,
Prelates, and preestes · prayen and by-seche
Deuowtliche day and nyȝt · and with-drawe hem fro synne,
And crye to Crist that he wolde · hus coluere sende,
The whiche is the holy gost · that out of heuene descendede,
To make a perpetuel pees · by-twyne the prynce of heuene
And alle manere of men · that on this molde lybbeth.
Yf preest-hod were parfit and preyede thus · the peuple sholde amende,
That now contrarien Cristes lawes · and Cristendom despisen.
For sutthe that thes Sarasyns · scribes, and thes Iewes
Hauen a lippe of oure by-leyue · the lightloker, me thynketh,
Thei sholde turne, who so trauayle wolde · and of the Trinite techen hem.
For alle paynymes preyen · and parfitliche by-leyuen
In the grete heye god · and hus grace asken,
And maken here mone to Makamede · here message to shewe.

C. 229. in*parfyȝt* P. 232. oolde P. 233. p*arfyȝt* P. 235. *et—&c.* is in F only. 241. mannes I; manis T; PEMFG *om.* 244. Prelatis P. 246. seynde (*for* sende) P. 249. of MFT; P *om.* 254. who so IT; þat PEMF.

Thus in a faith lyueth that folke · and in a false mene,
And that is routhe for riȝtful men · that in the rewme wonyen,
And a peril to the pope · and prelatis that he maketh,
That bere bisshopes names · of Bedleem and Babiloigne;
[Whan the heye kynge of heuene · sent his sone to erthe,
Many miracles he wrouȝte · man for to turne;
In ensaumple that men schulde se · that by sadde resoun
Men miȝt nouȝt be saued · but thoruȝ mercy and grace,
And thoruȝ penaunce and passion · and parfit bylef;
And by-cam man of a mayde · and *metropolitanus*,
And baptised and bishoped · with the blode of his herte
Alle that wilned, and wolde · with inne-wit by-leue it.
Many a seint sytthen · hath soffred to deye,
Al for to enforme the faith · in fele contreyes deyeden,
In Ynde and in Alisaundre · in Ermonye and in Spayne,
In delfol deth deyeden · for there faith sake;
In sauacion of the fayth · seynt Thomas was ymartired,
Amonges vn-kende Cristene · for Cristes loue he deyede,
And for the riȝt of al this reume · and al reumes Cristene.
Holy cherche is honoured · heyȝliche thoruȝ his deynge,
He is a forbysene to alle bishopes · and a briȝt myroure,
And souereyneliche to suche · that of Surrye bereth the name,]
That hippe aboute in Engelonde · to halwe mennes auteres,
And crepe amonges curatoures · and confessen ageyne the lawe,
Nolite mittere falcem in messem alienam, etc.
Many man for Crystes loue · was martired in Romanye
Er any Crystendome was knowe there · or any crosse honoured.
Euery bisshop that bereth crosse · by that he is holden,
Thorw his prouynce to passe · and to his peple to shewe hym,
Tellen hem and techen hem · on the trinite to bileue,
And feden hem with gostly fode · and nedy folke to fynden.
Ac Ysaie of ȝow speketh · and Osyas bothe,
That no man schuld be bischope · but if he hadde bothe,
Bodily fode and gostly fode · and gyue there it nedeth;
In domo mea non est panis neque vestimentum, et ideo nolite constituere me regem.

B. 539–556. *These lines, found in* R *only, properly belong to the* **C**-text. 543. R *has* byle *for* bylef, *by mistake.* 545. bischiued (*for* bishoped) R. 546. woled (*for* wolde) R. 558. and WR; LCOB *om.* 560. Er W; Ar R; Er ar LC. 564–567. *From* and nedy (564) *to* fode (567) *is in* R *only; omitted in* LWCOB, *probably owing to the repetition of* gostly fode.

Thus in a faith lyueth that folke · and in a false mene;
And that is reuthe for the ryghtful men · that in the reame wonyeth,
And perel for the prelates · that the pope maketh;
That bereth name of Neptalym · of Nynyue and of Damaske.
For when the holy kynge of heuene · sende hus sone to erthe,
Meny myracles he wrouhte · man for to turne,
In ensample that men · sholde seo by sad reyson,
That men myghte nat be sauede · bote thorw mercy and grace,
And thorw penaunce and passioun · and parfyt by-leyue;
And by-cam a man of a mayde · and *metropolitanus*,
And baptisede, and busshoppede · with the blode of hus herte
Alle that wilnede other wolde · with inwit by-leue hit.
Meny seint sitthe · suffrede deth al-so;
For to enforme the faithe · ful wyde-where deyden,
In Inde and in Alisaundrie · in Ermanye, in Spayne,
And fro mysbyleue · meny man turnede.
In sauacion of mannys saule · seynt Thomas of Caunterbury
Among vnkynde Cristene · in holychurche was sleye,
And alle holychurche · honoured for that deyinge.
He is a forbusne to alle busshopes · and a bryȝt myrour,
And souereyneliche to alle suche · that of Surrye bereth name;
And nat in Engelonde to huppe abowte · and halewen menne auters,
And crepe in a-monge curatours · and confessen a-ȝen the lawe;
Nolite mittere falcem in messem alienam.
Meny man for Crystes loue · was martred a-mong Romaynes
Er Cristendome were knowe ther · other eny croys honoured.
Eueriche busshope, by the lawe · sholde buxumliche wende,
And pacientliche, thorgh hus prouynce · and to hus peple hym shewe,
Feden hem and fillen hem · and fere hem fro synne;
In baculi forma · sit presul hec tibi norma,
Fer, trahe, punge gregem · seruando per omnia legem;
And enchaunte hem to charite · on holychurche to be-leyue.

C. 259. ryghtful IFT; ryght PE. 260. *This line is from* M; *also in* IFT; PE *omit.* 261. þat IMFT; And PE. 262. eerthe P. 266. parfyȝt P. 268. an (*for* and) P. 269. inwihȝt P. 274. Cauntelbury P. 276. honourede P. 277. bryȝthe P. 279. engelounde P. 280. curatours MIFT; creatours PE. confesson P. *alienam messem* P. 282. wher (*for* were) P. honourede P. 283. weynde P. 285. fillen M; follen I; fullen T; fulle FG; folwen PE.

Ozias seith for such · that syke ben and fieble,
Inferte omnes decimas in oreum meum, vt sit cibus in domo mea.
Ac we Crystene creatures · that on the crosse byleuen,
Aren ferme as in the faith · goddes forbode elles!
And han clerkes to kepen vs ther-inne · and hem that shal come after vs.
And Iewes lyuen in lele lawe · owre lorde wrote it hym-selue,
In stone, for it stydfast was · and stonde sholde eure—
Dilige deum et proximum · is parfit Iewen lawe—
And toke it Moyses to teche men · til Messye come;
And on that lawe thei lyuen ȝit · and leten it the beste.
And ȝit knewe thei Cryst · that Crystendome tauȝte,
For a parfit prophete · that moche peple saued
Of selcouth sores · thei seyen it ofte,
Bothe of myracles and meruailles · and how he men fested
With two fisshes and fyve loues · fyue thousande peple;
And bi that maungerye men miȝte wel se · that Messye he semed.
And whan he luft vp Lazar · that layde was in graue,
And vnder stone ded and stanke · with styf voys hym called,
Lazare, veni foras,
Dede hym rise and rowme · riȝt bifor the Iuwes.
Ac thei seiden and sworen · with sorcerye he wrouȝte,
And studyeden to stroyen hym · and stroyden hemself;
And thorw his pacyence her powere · to pure nouȝt he brouȝte;
Pacientes vincunt.
Danyel of her vndoynge · deuyned and seyde,
Cum sanctus sanctorum veniat, cessabit vnxio vestra.
And ȝet wenen tho wrecches · that he were *pseudo-propheta*,
And that his lore be lesynges · and lakken it alle,
And hopen that he be to come · that shal hem releue,
Moyses eft, or Messye · here maisteres ȝet deuyneth.
Ac Pharesewes and Sarasenes · Scribes and Grekis
Aren folke of on faith · the fader god thei honouren;
And sitthen that the Sarasenes · and also the Iewes
Konne the firste clause of owre bileue · *Credo in deum patrem omnipotentem,*
Prelates of Crystene prouynces · shulde preue, if thei myȝte,
Lere hem litlum and lytlum · *et in Iesum Christum filium,*

B. 568. *sit* O; LWCROB *om.* 579. seyen RB; seyne L; seyn C. 581. an (*for* and) L.

For as the kynde is of a knyȝt · other for a kynge to be take,
And among here enemys · in morteils bateles
To be culled and ouercome · the comune to defende;
So is the kynde of a curatour · for Cristes loue to preche,
And deye for hus dere children · to destroye dedly synne;
Bonus pastor;
And nameliche ther as lewede lyuen · and no lawe knowen.
Ac we Crystine conneth the lawe · and hauen of oure tounge
Busshopes and bookes · the byleyue to teche.
Iuwes lyuen in the lawe · that oure lord tauhte,
Moyses to be maister ther-of · til Messie come,
And in that lawe thei leyue · and leten hit for the beste.
And ȝut knewe thei Crist · that Cristendome tauhte,
And for a parfyt prophete · that muche peuple sauede,
And of selcouthe sores · sauede men ful ofte;
By the myracles that he made · Messie he semede,
Tho he lyfte vp Lazar · that leyde was in graue,
Quatriduanus cold · quik dude hym walke.
Iuwes seyden, that hit seyn · with sorcerie he wrouhte,
And stodieden hou to struyen him · and struyeden hem-selue,
And here power thourh hus pacience · to pure nouht brouhte.
And ȝut thei seien sothliche · and so doth the Sarrasyns,
That Iesus was bote a Iogelour · a Iaper a-monge the comune,
And a sophistre of sorcerie · and *pseudo-propheta*,
And hus lore was lesynge · and lacken hit alle,
And hopen that he be to comynge · that shal hem releue;
Moyses other Makemede · here maistres deuineth;
And haueth suspecion to be saf · bothe Sarrasyns and Iewes,
Thorwe Moyses and Makamede · and myghte of god that mad al.
Now sytthe that these Sarrasyns · and al-so the Iewes
Conne the ferste clause of oure by-leyue · *Credo in deum patrem*,
Prelates and preestes · sholde preoue, yf thei myghte,
Lere hem lytulum and lytulum · *et in Iesum Christum, filium eius*,

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C. 289. knyȝth P. 290. And MIT; Al FG; PE *om.* 292. a curatour EMIF; creatour P. 293. destroye IMFT; distrye P. 295. comeþ (*for* conneþ) P. 300. knewe EMT; knowe PI. 303. myracles EIF; meracles P. 307. stodieden IT; fondeden PEM. him MF; hym T; hem PEIG. 308. brouhten (*for* brouhte) P. 309. ȝut MG; ȝit IF; PE *om.* 317. theese P. an P. 320. *The first* lytulum *is miswritten* lytulhum *in* P.

Tyl thei couthe speke and spelle · *et in spiritum sanctum,*
And rendren it and recorden it · with *remissionem peccatorum,*
Carnis resurreccionem, et vitam eternam. Amen.'

PASSUS XVI.

Passus xvj^us^, et primus de Dobet.

'NOW faire falle ȝow!' quod I tho · 'for ȝowre faire shewynge,
For Haukynnes loue the actyf man · euere I shal ȝow louye;
Ac ȝet I am in a were · what charite is to mene.'
'It is a ful trye tree,' quod he · 'trewly to telle.
Mercy is the more ther-of · the myddel stokke is Reuthe.
The leues ben Lele-Wordes · the lawe of Holycherche,
The blosmes beth Boxome-Speche · and Benygne-Lokynge;
Pacience hatte the pure tre · and pore symple of herte,
And so, thorw god and thorw good men · groweth the frute Charite.'
'I wolde trauaille,' quod I, 'this tree to se · twenty hundreth myle,
And forto haue my fylle of that frute · forsake al other saulee.
Lorde,' quod I, 'if any wiȝte wyte · whider-oute it groweth?'
'It groweth in a gardyne,' quod he · 'that god made hym-seluen,
Amyddes mannes body · the more is of that stokke;
Herte hatte the herber · that it in groweth,
And *Liberum-Arbitrium* · hath the londe to ferme,
Vnder Piers the Plowman · to pyken it and to weden it.'
'Piers the Plowman!' quod I tho · and al for pure ioye
That I herde nempne his name · anone I swouned after,
And laye longe in a lone dreme · and atte laste me thouȝte,
That Pieres the Plowman · al the place me shewed,
And bad me toten on the tree · on toppe and on rote.
With thre pyles was it vnder-piȝte · I perceyued it sone.
'Pieres,' quod I, 'I preye the · whi stonde thise piles here?'
'For wyndes, wiltow wyte,' quod he · 'to witen it fram fallynge;
Cum ecciderit iustus, non collidetur; quia Dominus supponit manum suam;

B. 11. saulee *is glossed by* edulium. 13. a WCROB; L *om.* 15. herber WCO; erber LR; herbergh B.

Til thei couthe speke and spelle · *et in spiritum sanctum,*
Recorden hit and rendren hit · wyth *remissionem peccatorum,*
Carnis resurrectionem, et uitam eternam. Amen.'
Hic explicit passus primus de Dobet.

PASSUS XIX.

Hic incipit passus secundus de Dobet.

'LEUE *Liberum Arbitrium,*' quath ich · 'ich leyue, as ich hope,
Thou couthest telle and teche me · to Charite, ich leyue?'
Then louh *Liberum Arbitrium* · and ladde me forth with tales,
Til we comen in-to a contree · *Cor-hominis* hit hyhte,
Herber of alle pryuytees · and of holynesse.
Euene in the myddes · an ympe, as hit were,
That hihte *Ymago-dei* · graciousliche hit growede.
Thenne gan ich asken what hit hyhte · and he me sone tolde—
'The tree hihte Trewe-loue,' quath he · 'the trinite hit sette;
Thorgh louely lokynge hit lyueth · and launceth vp blossemes,
The whiche blosmes burnes · Benygne-speche callen;
And ther-of cometh a good frut · the which men callen Werkes
Of holynesse, of hendynesse · of help-hym-that-neodeth,
The whiche is callid *Caritas* · Cristes owen fode,
And solaceth alle soules · sorghful in purgatorie.'
'Now, certes,' ich seide · and sykede for ioye,
'Ich thonke 3ow a thowsend sythes · that 3e me hider kende;
And suththen that 3e fowche-saue · to seye me what hit hihte.'
And he thonked me tho · bote thenne took ich hede,
Hit hadde shoriers to shoue hit vp · thre shides of o lengthe,
And of o kynne colour · and o kynde, as me thouhte,
All thre yliche longe · and yliche large.
Muche meruailede me · on what more thei growede;
And efte askede of hym · of what wode thei were?
'Thees thre shoryeres,' quath he · 'that bereth vp this plonte,
Thei by-tokneth trewely · the Trinite of heuene;

C. 321. spelle MIT; spele PFG. *et*; *miswritten* and P.
Passus XIX. 17. 3ow MIT; þe PEFG. 18. foweche P. 20. lengþye P.

And, in blowyng-tyme, abite the floures · but if this piles helpe.
The Worlde is a wykked wynde · to hem that wolden treuthe,
Coueityse cometh of that wynde · and crepeth amonge the leues,
And forfret neigh the frute · thorw many faire si3tes.
Thanne with the firste pyle I palle hym down · that is, *potencia-Dei-Patris.*
The Flesshe is a fel wynde · and in flourynge-tyme
Thorw lykyng and lustes · so loude he gynneth blowe,
That it norissheth nice si3tes · and some tyme wordes,
And wikked werkes ther-of · wormes of synne,
And forbiteth the blosmes · ri3t to the bare leues.
Thanne sette I to the secounde pile · *sapiencia-Dei-patris,*
That is, the passioun and the power · of owre prynce Iesu,
Thorw preyeres and thorw penaunces · and goddes passioun in mynde,
I saue it til I se it rypen · and somdel y-fruited.
And thanne fondeth the Fende · my fruit to destruye,
With alle the wyles that he can · and waggeth the rote,
And casteth vp to the croppe · vnkynde neighbores,
Bakbiteres breke-cheste · brawleres and chideres,
And leith a laddre there-to · of lesynges aren the ronges,
And feccheth away my floures sumtyme · afor bothe myn eyhen.
Ac *Liberum-Arbitrium* · letteth hym some tyme,
That is lieutenant to loken it wel · by leue of my-selue;
Videatis qui peccat in spiritum sanctum, nunquam remittetur, etc.;
Hoc est idem, qui peccat per liberum arbitrium non repugnat.
Ac whan the Fende and the Flesshe · forth with the Worlde
Manasen byhynde me · my fruit for to fecche,
Thanne *Liberum-Arbitrium* · laccheth the thridde plante,
And palleth adown the pouke · purelich thorw grace
And helpe of the holy goste · and thus haue I the maystrie.'
'Now faire falle 3ow, Pieres,' quod I · 'so faire 3e discryuen
The powere of this postes · and her propre my3te.
Ac I have thou3tes a threve · of this thre piles,
In what wode thei woxen · and where that thei growed;
For alle ar thei aliche longe · none lasse than other,
And to my mynde, as me thinketh · on o more thei growed,

B. 47. *repugnat* is written *repug'* or *repūg'* in the MSS.

Thre persons in-departable · perpetuel were euere,
Of o wyl, of o wit · and here-with ich kepe
The frut of this faire tree · fro thre wykkede wyndes,
And fro fallyng of stok · hit faille nouht of hus myghte.
The Worlde is a wykkede wynde · to hem that wolde treuthe;
Covetyse cometh of that wynde · and *Caritas* hit abiteth;
And for-freteth that frut · with manye fayre syghtes;
And with the ferste plaunke ich palle hym doune · *Potencia-dei-patris.*
Thanne is Flessh a fel wynde · in flouryng-tyme;
Thorgh lecherie and lustes · so loude he gynneth blowe,
That hit norischeth nyce syȝtes · and som tyme wordes,
And menye wykkede wormes · workes of synne,
And al for-bit *Caritas* · to the bare stalke;
Thanne sette ich the secunde plaunke · *Sapiencia-dei-patris,*
The which is the passion and penaunce · and the parfytnesse of Iesus,
And ther-with ich warde hit other-whyle · til hit wexe rype.
Thenne fondeth the Feende · my frut to destruye,
And leith a laddere ther-to · of lesynges be the ronges;
With alle the wyles that he can · waggeth the roote
Thorw bak-byters and braweleres · and thorwe bolde chyderes,
And shaketh hit; ne were hit vnder-shored · certes hit sholde nat stande.
So these lourdeines litheren ther-to · that alle the leues fallen,
And feccheth a-way this frut som tyme · by-fore bothe myn eyen.
Thenne palle ich a-downe the pouke · with the thridde shoryere,
The whiche is *Spiritus-sanctus* · and soth-fast byleyue,
And that is grace of the Holy Gost; · and thus gat ich the mastrye.'
Ich totide vp-on that tree tho · and thenne tok ich hede,
Whether the frut were faire · other foul to loken on.
And the frut was wonder fair · non fairer beo myghte;
Ac in thre degrees hit grew · gret ferly me thouhte,
And askede tho 'yf hit were · al of on kynde?'
'Ȝe, certes,' he seide · 'and sothliche thow leyue hit.
Hit is al of o kynde · and that shal ich prouen;

C. 31. wordle P. 32. *caritas* hit abiteþ ITG; hit beteþ *caritas* P. 35. fel MFTG; feel P. 37. norischeþ IEG; norceþ P. 43. fonndeþ P. 44. leithe P. 47. shorede P. 48. þees P. 54. wher (*for* were) P.

And of o gretnesse · and grene of greyne thei semen.'
'That is soth,' seide Pieres · 'so it may bifalle;
I shal telle the as tite · what this tree hatte.
The grounde there it groweth · Goodnesse it hi3te,
And I haue tolde the what hi3te the tree · the Trinite it meneth'—
And egrelich he loked on me · and ther-fore I spared
To asken hym any more ther-of · and badde hym ful fayre
To discreue the fruit · that so faire hangeth.

'Here now bineth,' quod he tho · 'if I nede hadde,
Matrymonye I may nyme · a moiste fruit with-alle.
Thanne contenence is nerre the croppe · as calewey bastarde,
Thanne bereth the croppe kynde fruite · and clenneste of alle,
Maydenhode, angeles peres · and rathest wole be ripe,
And swete with-oute swellyng · soure worth it neuere.'

B. 69. calewey O; caylewey R; kaylewey W; calawey Y; calwey L.

Ac somme ar swettere than some · and sonnere wollen rotye.
Men may seo on an appul-treo · meny tyme and ofte,
Of o kynne apples · aren nat yliche grete,
Ne of sewynge smale · ne of o swetnesse swete.
Tho that sitten in the sonne-syde · sonner aren rype,
Swettour and saueriour · and also more grettoure
Than tho that selde hauen the sonne · and sitten in the north-half;
And so hit fareth sothly · sone, by oure kynde.
Adam was as tree · and we aren as hus apples,
Somme of ows sothfast · and some variable,
Somme litel and some large · like apples of kynde.
As weddede men and wedewes · and ryȝt worthy maidenes,
The whiche the *Seynt Esprit* seweth · the sonne of al heuene,
Conforteth hem in here continence · that lyuen in contemplacion,
As monkes and monyeles · men of holichurche;
These hauen hete of the Holi Gost · as crop of treo the sonne.
Wedewes and wedeweres · that here owen wil for-saken,
And chast leden here lyf · ys lyf of contemplacion,
And more lykyng to oure lorde · than lyue as kynde asketh,
And folwe that the flessh wole · and frut forth brynge,
That lettered men in here langage · *Actiua Uita* callen.'
'Ȝe, syre,' ich seide, 'and sitthen · ther aren bote two lyues
That oure lorde a-loweth · as lered men ous techeth,
That is *Actiua Uita* · and *Uita Contemplatiua*,
Whi groweth this frut in thre degrees?' · 'for a good skyle,' he seide;
'Her by-neothe ich may nyme · yf ich neode hadde,
Matrimonye, a moiste frut · that multiplieth the peple.
Thenne a-boue is a betere frut · ac bothe two ben goode,
Wedewehode, more worthier · than wedlok, as in heuene.
Thanne is Virginite, more vertuous · and fairest as in heuene,
For that is euene with angeles · and angeles peer.
Hit was the furste frut · that the fader of heuene blessede,
And bad hit be of a bat of erthe · a man and a mayde;

C. 60. sannere P. 63. sewynge EIMT; sywynge P. o EIF; PMT *om.* 66. þo MIFTG; P *om.* 67. sotthly P. soone P. 71. ryȝth P. 72. seweþ MI; sueth F; PE *om.* 73. hem MEITF; him P. 81. two FG; to PM. 85. habbe P. 86. multepliеþ P. 87. two ET; to P. 92. P *om.* 1*st* of.

I prayed Pieres to pulle adown · an apple, and he wolde,
And suffre me to assaye · what sauoure it hadde.
And Pieres caste to the croppe · and thanne comsed it to crye,
And wagged Wydwehode · and it wepte after.
And whan it meued Matrimoigne · it made a foule noyse,
That I had reuth whan Piers rogged · it gradde so reufulliche.
For euere as thei dropped adown · the deuel was redy,
And gadred hem alle togideres · bothe grete and smale,
Adam and Abraham · and Ysay the prophete,
Sampson and Samuel · and seynt Iohan the baptiste;
Bar hem forth boldely · no body hym letted,
And made of holy men his horde · in *lymbo inferni*,
There is derkenesse and drede · and the deuel maister.
And Pieres for pure tene · that o pile he lauȝte,
And hitte after hym · happe how it myȝte,
Filius, bi the Fader wille · and frenesse of *Spiritus Sancti*,
To go robbe that raggeman · and reue the fruit fro hym.

And thanne spakke *Spiritus Sanctus* · in Gabrieles mouthe,
To a mayde that hiȝte Marye · a meke thinge with-alle,
'That one Iesus, a Iustice sone · moste Iouke in her chambre,

In menynge that the faireste thyng · the furste thyng sholde honoure,
And the clennest creature · creatour ferste knowe.
In kynges court and knyghtes · the clennest men and fairest
Shullen serue for the lord selue · so fareth god almyghty.
Maidenes and marteres · ministred hym her in erthe,
And in heuene buth most pryue · and next hym by reson,
For the fairest frut · by-fore hym as of eorthe,
And swete with-oute swellinge · soure worth hit neuere.'
'This is a propre plonte,' quath ich · 'and pryueliche hit bloweth,
And bryngeth forth faire frut · folke of all nacion,
Bothe parfit and inparfit; · pure fayn ich wolde
A-saye what sauour hit hadde' · ich seide that tyme;
'Leue *Liberum-Arbitrium* · leet som lyf hit shake.'
A-non he het Elde · an hih for to clymbe,
And shaken hit sharply · the ripen sholden falle.
Elde clam towarde the crop · than comsede hit to crie;
He waggede Wedewehode · and hit wepte after;
He meuede Matrimonye · hit made a foule noyse.
For euere as Elde hadde eny doun · the deuel was wel redy,
And gederide hem alle to-gederis · bothe grete and smale,
Adam and Abraham · and Ysaye the prophete,
Sampson and Samuel · and seynt Iohan the baptist,
And bar hem forth baldely · no body tho hym lette,
And made of holy men hus horde · in *limbo inferni*,
Ther is derknesse and drede · and the deuel maister.
Thenne meuede hym mod · *in maiestate dei*,
That *Libera-Uoluntas-Dei* · lauhte the myddel shoriere,
And hitte after the fende · happe hou hit myghte.
Filius, by the faders wil · flegh with *Spiritus Sanctus*,
To ransake that rageman · and reue hym hus apples,
That fyrst man deceyuede · thorgh frut and false by-heste.
And thenne spake *Spiritus Sanctus* · in Gabrielis mouthe
To a mayde that hihte Marie · a meek thyng with alle,
That on Iesus, a Iustice sone · moste Iouken in hire chaumbre,

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C. 101. plonte EFG; plante MIT; plente P. bl̄weþ P. 110. meeuede P. 116. P *ins.* doun *after* limbo; see B-text. 117. derknesse EMFT; deornesse (*sic*) P. 118. meouede P. 119. mydel P. 121. fleyght (*for* flegh) P. 122. þat EMFTG; þe P. 125. To a EMFTG; To þat P. P *om. 2nd* a.

Tyl *plenitudo temporis* · fully comen were,
That Pieres fruit floured · and fel to be ripe.
And thanne shulde Iesus Iuste there-fore · bi Iuggement of armes,
Whether shulde fonge the fruit · the fende or hymselue.'
The mayde myldeliche tho · the messager graunted,
And seyde hendelich to hym · 'lo me, his hande-mayden
For to worchen his wille · with-outen any synne;'
Ecce ancilla domini; fiat michi secundum verbum tuum, etc.
And in the wombe of that wenche · was he fourty wokes,
Tyl he wex a faunt thorw her flesshe · and of fi3tyng couthe,
To haue y-fou3te with the fende · ar ful tyme come.
And Pieres the Plowman · parceyued plenere tyme,
And lered hym lechecrafte · his lyf for to saue,
That thowgh he were wounded with his enemye · to warisshe hym-self;
And did him assaye his surgerye · on hem that syke were,
Til he was parfit practisoure · if any peril felle,
And sou3te oute the syke · and synful bothe,
And salued syke and synful · bothe blynde and crokede,
And comune wommen conuerted · and to good torned;
Non est sanis opus medicus, set infirmis, etc.
Bothe meseles and mute · and in the menysoun blody,
Ofte he heled suche · he ne helde it for no maistrye,
Saue tho he leched Lazar · that hadde yleye in graue,
Quatriduanus quelt; · quykke did hym walke.
Ac as he made the maistrye · *mestus cepit esse*,
And wepte water with his eyghen · there seyen it manye.
Some that the si3te seyen · saide that tyme,
That he was leche of lyf · and lorde of heigh heuene.
Iewes Iangeled there-a3eyne · and Iugged lawes,
And seide he wrou3te thorw wicchecrafte · and with the deueles mi3te,
Demonium habes, etc.
'Thanne ar 3e cherles,' quod Iesus · 'and 3owre children bothe,
And Sathan 3owre saueoure · 3ow-selue now 3e witnessen.
For I haue saued 3ow-self,' seith Cryst · 'and 3owre sones after,

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B. 96. fonge WO; fonde LCRB. 99. *secundum—tuum* is in B only. 107. if WCROBY; of L. felle CBY; fel O; fille W; fulle LR. 110. *infirmis* O; the rest *in'*. 112. it WROB; LC *om.* 117. seyne L; *see last line.* 121. LWCY *corruptly have* ich *for* ihc (=iesus).

Til *plenitudo temporis* · tyme ycome were,
That Elde felde efte that frut · other fulle to be rype,
That Iesus sholde Iuste ther-fore · in Iugement of armes,
Who sholde fecche this frut · the feend other Iesus self.
The maide myldeliche tho · the messager hue answerede,
And saide hendyliche to him · 'loo, me, hus handmayde,
For to worchen hus wil · with-oute eny synne;
Ecce ancilla domini, fiat michi secundum verbum tuum,' etc.
And in the wombe of that wenche · he was fourty wokes,
And man by-cam of that mayde · to saue mankynde,
Byg and abydynge · and bold in hus barn-hede,
To hauen fouhten with the feende · ar ful tyme come.
Ac *Liberum-Arbitrium* · leche-crafte hym tauhte,
Til *plenitudo temporis* · hih tyme a-prochede,
That suche a surgeyn setthen · yseye was ther neuere,
Ne non so faithfol fysician; · for, alle that hym bysouhte,
He lechede hem of here langoure · lazars and blynde bothe;
Ceci uident, claudi ambulant, leprosi mundantur:
And comune wymmen conuertede · and clansede hem of synne.

And he lyft vp Lazar · that lay in hus tombe,
Quatriduanus cold · quyke dude hym rome.
Ac er he made that miracle · *mestus cepit esse*,
And wepte water with hus eyen · the whi witen fewe.
Ac thoo that seyen that selcouth · seyden that tyme,
That he was god other godes sone · for that grete wonder.
And somme Iewes seiden · with sorcerie he wrouhte,
And thorwe the myghte of Mahon · and thorw mysbyleyue;
Demonium habes.
'Thanne Sathan is 3oure sauyour,' quath Iesus · 'and hath saued 3ow ofte;
Ac ich sauede 3ow sondry tymes · and also ich fedde 3ow

C. 127. ycome ETG; come P. 128. rype MFGT; rypy PE. 129. in M; and PF; & by FG; & be in T. 133. *fiat—tuum* is in F only. 141. hym EMFGT; P *om.* 147. whiten P. 152. saveyour P. sauede P. 153. and MFTG; PE *om.*

3owre bodyes, 3owre bestes · and blynde men holpen,
And fedde 3ow with fisshes · and with fyue loues,
And left baskettes ful of broke mete · bere awey who so wolde;—'
And mysseide the Iewes manliche · and manaced hem to bete,
And knokked on hem with a corde · and caste adown her stalles,
That in cherche chaffareden · or chaungeden any moneye,
And seyde it in si3te of hem alle · so that alle herden,
'I shal ouertourne this temple · and adown throwe,
And in thre dayes after · edifye it newe,
And make it as moche other more · in alle manere poyntes,
As euere it was, and as wyde · wher-fore I hote 3ow,
Of preyeres and of parfitnesse · this place that 3e callen;
Domus mea domus oracionis vocabitur.'
Enuye and yuel wille · was in the Iewes;
Thei casten and contreueden · to kulle hym whan thei mi3te,
Vche daye after other · theire tyme thei awaited.
Til it bifel on a Fryday · a litel bifore Paske,
The Thorsday byfore · there he made his maundee,
Sittyng atte soperè · he seide thise wordes—
'I am solde thorw one of 3ow · he shal the tyme rewe
That euere he his saueoure solde · for syluer or elles.'
Iudas Iangeled there-a3ein · ac Iesus hym tolde,
It was hym-self sothely · and seide, '*tu dicis.*'
Thanne went forth that wikked man · and with the Iewes mette,
And tolde hem a tokne · how to knowe with Iesus,
And which tokne to this day · to moche is y-vsed,
That is, kissyng and faire contenaunce · and vnkynde wille;
And so was with Iudas tho · that Iesus bytrayed.
'*Aue, raby,*' quod that ribaude · and ri3t to hym he 3ede,
And kiste hym, to be cau3t there-by · and kulled of the Iewes.
Thanne Iesus to Iudas · and to the Iewes seyde,
'Falsenesse I fynde · in thi faire speche,
And gyle in thi gladde chere · and galle is in thi lawghynge.
Thow shalt be myroure to manye · men to deceyue,
Ac the wors and thi wikkednesse · shal worth vpon thiselue;
Necesse est vt veniant scandala; ve homini illi per quem scandalum venit!
Thow I bi tresoun be ytake · at 3owre owne wille,

B. 139. bifor L. 145. hym-self WCROB; hym L.

With fisshes and with fyf loues · fyfe thousend at ones,
And ther-of lefte baskettes · ful of broke mete,
Broke bred, to beren hit · a-weye hoo so wolde.
Vnkynde and vnknowing!' quath Crist · and with a rop smot hem,
And ouer-turnede in the temple · here tables and here stalles,
And drof hem out alle · that ther bowten and solde,
Eiecit ementes et vendentes de templo, etc.
And seide, 'this is an hous · of orisouns and of holynesse,
And whenne that my wil is · ich wol hit ouer-throwe,
And er thre dayes after · edefye hit newe;'
Intra triduum reedificabo illud.
The Iewes tolden the Iustice · how that Iesus seyde;
Ac the ouerturnyng of the temple · by-tokned the resureccion.
Enuye and vuel will · ȝorn in the Iewes,
And porsuede hym pryueliche · and for pans hym bouhte,
Ne forte tumultus fieret in populo,
Of Iudas the Iewe · Iesus owene disciple.
This by-fil on a Fryday · a litel by-fore Paske,
That Iudas and Iewes · Iesus thei mette.

'*Aue, rabbi*,' quath that ribaud · and right til hym he ȝede,
And custe Iesus, to be knowe ther-by · and kauht of the Iewes.
Thanne Iesus to Iudas · and to the Iewes seyde,
'Falsnesse ich fynde · in thy faire speche,
And kene care in thy cossyngs · and combraunce to thiselue.
Thow shalt be myrour to menye · men to deceyue;
Wo to hem that thy wiles vsen · to the worldes ende!
Ve homini illi per quem scandalum uenit.
Sitthe ich by treson am take · and to ȝoure wille, Iewes,

C. 159. *Eiecit*, &c. is in F only. 161. wol EG; wolde PT. 162. *Intra —illud* is in F only. 166. hym T; him MFI; hem PE. 171. kauhte P. 174. cossyns PE. þiselue EFT; þyselue IG; þe selue P. 176. wordles PG. 177. wille GT; wil F; wiles I; PE *om.*

Suffreth my postles in pays · and in pees gange.'
On a Thoresday in thesternesse · thus was he taken
Thorw Iudas and Iewes · Iesus was his name;
That on the Fryday folwynge · for mankynde sake
Iusted in Ierusalem · a Ioye to vs alle.
On crosse vpon Caluarye · Cryst toke the bataille,
Aȝeines deth and the deuel · destruyed her botheres myȝtes,
Deyde, and deth fordid · and daye of nyȝte made.
And I awaked there-with · and wyped myne eyghen,
And after Piers the Plowman · pryed and stared.
Estwarde and westwarde · I awayted after faste,
And ȝede forth as an ydiote · in contre to aspye
After Pieres the Plowman; · many a place I souȝte.
And thanne mette I with a man · a Mydlenten Sondaye,
As hore as an hawethorne · and Abraham he hiȝte.
I frayned hym first · fram whennes he come,
And of whennes he were · and whider that he thouȝte.
'I am Feith,' quod that freke · 'it falleth nouȝte to lye,
And of Abrahames hous · an heraud of armes.
I seke after a segge · that I seigh ones,
A ful bolde bacheler · I knewe hym by his blasen.'
'What bereth that buirn?' quod I tho · 'so blisse the bityde!'
'Thre leodes in o liṭh · non lenger than other,
Of one mochel and myȝte · in mesure and in lengthe;
That one doth, alle doth · and eche doth by his one.
The firste hath miȝte and maiestee · maker of alle thinges;
Pater is his propre name · a persone by hym-selue.
The secounde of that sire is · sothfastnesse, *Filius*,
Wardeyne of that witte hath · was euere with-oute gynnynge.
The thridde hatte the Holygoost · a persone by hym-selue;
The liȝte of alle that lyf hath · a londe and a watre,
Confortoure of creatures · of hym cometh al blisse.
So thre bilongeth for a lorde · that lordeship claymeth,
Myȝte, and a mene · to knowe his owne myȝte,
Of hym and of his seruaunt · and what thei suffre bothe.
So god that gynnyng hadde neure · but tho hym good thouȝte,
Sent forth his sone · as for seruaunt that tyme,
To occupien hym here · til issue were spronge,
That is, children of charite · and holicherche the moder.
Patriarkes and prophetes · and aposteles were the chyldren,

Suffreth myne apostles in pees · and in pees gangen;'
Sinite hos abire, etc.
Thus Iewes to the Iustices · Iesus thei ladden.—
With muche noyse that nyght · ner frentik ich awakede,
In inwit and in alle wittes · after *Liberum-Arbitrium*
Ich waitede wyterly, ac ne wiste · whider he wente,
And thanne mette ich with a man · on Mydlentens Soneday,
As hor as an hawethorn · and Abraam he hihte.
'Of whennes art thow?' quath ich · and hendeliche hym grette.
'Ich am with faith,' quath that freek · 'hit falleth nat me to lye,
An heraude of armes · er eny lawe were.'
'What is hus conysaunce,' quath ich · 'in hus cote-armure?'
'Thre persones in o pensel,' quath he · 'departable from other;
O speche and o spirit · spryngeth out of alle,
Of o wit, of on wil · were neuere a-twynne;
And sondry to seo vpon · *solus deus* he hoteth.'
'Siththen thei ben surlepes,' quath ich · 'thei han sondry names.'
'That is soth,' saide he · 'the syre hatte *Pater;*
And the secunde is a sone · of the syre, *Filius;*
The thridde is that halt al · a thyng by hym-selue,
Holigost is hus name · and he is in alle.'
'This is merk thyng for me,' quath ich · 'and for meny other,
How o lord myghte lyue a thre · ich leyue hit nat,' ich seyde.

'Muse not to muche ther-on,' quath Faith · 'tyl thow more knowe,
Ac looke thow leyue hit leelly · al thy lyf-tyme,
That thre by-longeth to on lorde · that lygaunce cleymeth,
Mighte, and a mene · to seo hus owen mighte,
Of hym-self and of hus seruaunt · and what suffreth hem bothe.
God that gynnynge hadde neuere · bote tho hym gode thouhte,
Sente forth hus sone · as for seruaunt that tyme,
To okupien hym here · til issue were spronge,
The whiche aren children of charite · and holichurche the moder.
Patriarkes and prophetes · and apostles were the children;

C. 178. *Sinite—&c.* is in F only. 182. whider MFIT; weder P. 185. art MIFT; ert PEG. 187. And (*for* An) P. 193. surlepees (*for* surlepes) PE; surlep*us* F; surlepis T. 198. meerk P. 203. a MFTG; P *om.* 204. what MIFTG; PE *om.*

And Cryst and Crystenedome · and Crystene holycherche.
In menynge that man moste · on o god bileue,
And there hym lyked and loued · in thre persones hym shewed.
And that it may be so and soth · manhode it sheweth,
Wedloke and widwehode · with virgynyte ynempned,
In toknynge of the Trinite · was taken oute of o man.
Adam owre aller fader · Eue was of hym-selue,
And the issue that thei hadde · it was of hem bothe,
And either is otheres Ioye · in thre sondry persones,
And in heuene and here · one syngulere name;
And thus is mankynde or manhede · of matrimoigne yspronge,
And bitokneth the Trinite · and trewe bileue.
Miȝte is matrimoigne · that multiplieth the erthe,
And bitokneth trewly · telle if I dorste,
Hym that firste fourmed al · the fader of heuene.
The sone, if I it durst seye · resembleth wel the wydwe,
Deus meus, deus meus, vt quid dereliquisti me?
That is, creatour wex creature · to knowe what was bothe;
As widwe with-oute wedloke · was neure ȝete yseye,
Na more myȝte god be man · but if he moder hadde;
So wydwe with-oute wedloke · may nouȝte wel stande,
Ne matrimoigne with-oute moillerye · is nouȝt moche to preyse;
Maledictus homo qui non reliquit semen in Israel, etc.
Thus in thre persones · is perfitliche manhede,
That is, man and his make · and moillere her children,
And is nouȝt but gendre of o generacioun · bifor Iesu Cryst in heuene,
So is the Fader forth with the Sone · and fre wille of bothe;
Spiritus procedens a patre et filio;
Which is the Holygoste of alle · and alle is but o god.

B. 209. þus WCOBY; þis L. 213. Hym WO; He LCRBY.

And Crist and Cristendome · and Cristene holichurche
By-tokeneth the Trinite · and trewe by-leyue.
O god almyghty · that man made and wrouhte,
Semblable to hym-self · er eny synne were,
A thre he is ther he is · and hereof bereth wittnesse
The werkes that hym-self wrouhte · and this worlde bothe;
Celi enarrant gloriam dei, et opera manuum eius annunciat firmamentum.
That he is thre persones departable · ich proue hit by man-kynde,
And o god almyghty · yf alle men beo of Adam.
Eue was of Adam · and out of hym ydrawe,
And Abel of hem bothe · and alle thre o kynde;
Ac these thre that ich carpe of · Adam, and Eue,
And Abel, here issue · aren bote on in man-hede.
Matrimonie with-oute moillere · is nat muche to preyse,
The bible bereth witnesse · a book of the olde lawe,
That a-corsed alle couples · that no kynde forth brouhte;
Maledictus sit homo qui non reliquit semen in israel.
And a man with-oute a make · myghte nat wel of kynde
Multeplie, ne more-ouer · with-oute a make louye,
Ne with-oute a sowere be suche seede · this we seen alle.
Now go we to god-hede; · in god, Fader of heuene,
Was the Sone in hym-selue · in a *simile*, as Eue
Was, whanne god wolde · out of the wye y-drawe.
And as Abel of Adam · and of hus wif Eue
Sprang forth and spak · a spire of hem tweyne,
So out of the Syre and of the Sone · the *Seynt Espirit* of bothe
Ys, and ay was · and worth with-outen ende.
And as thre persones palpable · is pureliche bote o man-kynde,
The whiche is man and hus make · and moillere-is issue,
So is god godes sone · in thre persones the Trinite.
In matrimonie aren thre · and of o man cam alle thre,
And to godhede goth thre · and of o god is alle thre;
Loo, treys encountre treys,' quath he · 'in godhede and in man-hede.'

C. 211. trywe P. 220. Ac M; And IFTG; As PE. 221. here EITG; heer P; her F. 225. welle P. 228. go we TG; gowe I; goo wee P. 230. wye EG; wi3 T; wy F; weye P. 232. spire EFT; spir P. tweyene P. 234. was T; weren PEMFG.

Thus in a somer I hym seigh · as I satte in my porche;

I ros vp and reuerenced hym · and riȝt faire hym grette;
Thre men to my syȝte · I made wel at ese,
Wesche her feet and wyped hem · and afterward thei eten
Calues flesshe and cakebrede · and knewe what I thouȝte;
Ful trewe tokenes bitwene vs is · to telle whan me lyketh.
Firste he fonded me · if I loued bettere
Hym, or Ysaak myn ayre · the which he hiȝte me kulle.
He wiste my wille by hym · he wil me it allowe,
I am ful syker in soule ther-of · and my sone bothe.
I circumcised my sone sitthen for his sake;
My-self and my meyne · and alle that male were
Bledden blode for that lordes loue · and hope to blisse the tyme.
Myn affiaunce and my faith · is ferme in this bilieue;
For hym-self bihiȝte to me · and to myne issue bothe
Londe and lordship · and lyf with-outen ende;
To me and to myn issue · more ȝete he me graunted,
Mercy for owre mysdedes · as many tyme as we asken;
Quam olim Abrahe promisisti, et semini eius.
And sith he sent me to seye · I shoulde do sacrifise,
And done hym worshipe with bred · and with wyn bothe,
And called me the fote of his faith · his folke forto saue,
And defende hem fro the fende · folke that on me leueden.
Thus haue I ben his heraude · here and in helle,
And conforted many a careful · that after his comynge wayten.
And thus I seke hym,' he seide · 'for I herde seyne late
Of a barne that baptised hym · Iohan Baptiste was his name,
That to patriarkes and to prophetes · and to other peple in derknesse
Seyde that he seigh here · that sholde saue vs alle;
Ecce agnus dei, etc.'
I hadde wonder of his wordes · and of his wyde clothes;
For in his bosome he bar a thyng · that he blissed euere.
And I loked on his lappe · a lazar lay there-inne

B. 249. herde WCROB; L *om.*

'Hauest thow seyen this?' ich seide · 'alle thre, and o god?'
'In a somer ich seyh hym,' quath he · 'as ich sat in my porche,
Where god cam goynge a-thre · ryght by my gate;
Tres uidit et unum adorauit.
Ich ros vp and reuerencede god · and ryght fayre hym grette,
Wesh here feet, and wypede hem · and after thei eten,
And what ich thouhte and my wyf · he ous wel tolde.
He by-hihte ous issue and heir · and in oure olde age,
Ful trewe tokne by-twyne ous is · what tyme that ich mette hym;
How he fondede me ferst · my faire sone Ysaac,
To make sacrifice of hym · he het me, hym to honoure.
Ich with-sat nat hus heste · ich hope and by-leyue
Wher ich walke in this worlde · he wol hit me a-lowe.
Ich circumsysede my sone · and al-so, for hus sake,
My-self and my meyne · and alle that maule were
Bledden blod for that lordes loue · ich hope to blesse the tyme.
Myn affiaunce and my feith · is ferm in hus by-leyue;
For hym-self seide ich sholde haue · and myn issue bothe
Lond and lordshup ynow · and lyf with-outen ende.
To me and to myn issue · more he by-hihte,
Mercy for oure mysdedes · as meny tymes
As we wilnede and wolde · with mouth and herte asken.
And sitthen he sende me to sayn · and seide that ich sholde
Worshupen hym with wyn · and with bred bothe
At ones on an auter · in worshup of the Trinite,
And make sacrifice so · som-what hit by-tokneth;
Ich leyue that thilke lorde thenke · a newe lawe to make;
Fiet unum ouile et unus pastor.
Thus haue ich beo hus heraude · her and in helle,
And comforted menye carful there · that after hus comyng loken.
For-thi ich seke him,' he seide · 'for seynt Iohan the baptist
Seide that he seih hym her · that sholde saue ous alle;
Ecce agnus dei qui tollit peccata mundi.'
Thenne hadde ich wonder of hus wordes · and of hus wide clothes,
For in hus bosom he bar a thyng · and that he blessede ofte.
And ich loked in hus lappe · a lazar lay ther-ynne,

C. 248. mette EFG; mete PT. 252. wordle P. 256. in IFT; PE *om.* 270. saue IFTG; ioye PE. *qui—mundi* is in F only.

Amonges patriarkes and profetes · pleyande togyderes.
'What awaytestow?' quod he · 'and what woldestow haue?'
'I wolde wyte,' quod I tho · 'what is in ȝowre lappe?'
'Loo!' quod he, and lete me se · 'lorde, mercy!' I seide,
'This is a present of moche prys · what prynce shal it haue?'
'It is a preciouse present,' quod he · 'ac the pouke it hath attached,
And me there-myde,' quod that man · 'may no wedde vs quite,
Ne no buyrn be owre borwgh · ne bryng vs fram his daungere;
Oute of the poukes pondfolde · no meynprise may vs fecche,
Tyl he come that I carpe of · Cryst is his name,
That shal delyure vs some daye · out of the deueles powere,
And bettere wedde for vs legge · than we ben alle worthy,
That is, lyf for lyf · or ligge thus euere
Lollynge in my lappe · tyl such a lorde vs fecche.'
'Allas!' I seyde, 'that synne · so longe shal lette
The myȝte of goddes mercy · that myȝt vs alle amende!'
I wepte for his wordes · with that sawe I an other
Rapelich renne forth; · the riȝte waye he went.
I affrayned hym fyrste · fram whennes he come,
And what he hiȝte and whider he wolde · and wightlich he tolde.

B. 260. a WCROB; L *om.*

With patriarkes and prophetes · pleiynge to-gederes.
'What waytest thow,' quath Faith · 'and what woldest thou haue?'
'Ich wolde wyte,' quath ich tho · 'what is in thy lappe?'
'Loo!' quath he, and leet me seo · 'lord, mercy!' ich seide,
'This is a present of muche prys · what pryns shal hit haue?'
'Hit is a preciouse present,' quath he · 'ac the pouke hit hath attached,
And me ther-with,' quath the wye · 'may no wed ous quite,
Ne no bern beo oure borghe · ne brynge ous out of daunger,
Fro the poukes poundfalde · no maynprise may ous fecche,
Til he come that ich carpe of · Crist is hus name,
That shal delyuery ous som day · out of the deueles powere,
And betere wed for ous wagen · than alle we beon worthi,
And that is, lif for lyf · other ligge thus euere,
Lollynge in my lappe thus · til such a lord ous fecche.'
'Alas!' ich seide, 'that synne · so longe shal lette
The myght of godes mercy · that myghte ous alle amende!'
And wepte for hus wordes; · with that ich seyh an other
Rappliche renne · the righte wey we wente;
And ich fraynede hym furst · fro whennes he come,
What he hihte, and whider he wolde · and wyghtliche he ous tolde.

Hic explicit passus secundus de Dobet.

C. 275. faiht P. 279. attachede P. 287. Lollynge IT; Longynge PEFG. 293. whider IT; whed*ur* F, whodere E; woder P.

PASSUS XVII.

Passus xvij^us^, et secundus de Do-bet.

'I AM *Spes*,' quod he, 'a spye · and spire after a kny3te,
That toke me a maundement · vpon the mounte of Synay,
To reule alle rewmes with; · I bere the writte here.'

'Is it asseled?' I seyde · 'may men se thi lettres?'
'Nay,' he sayde, 'I seke hym · that hath the sele to kepe;
And that is, crosse and Crystenedome · and Cryst there-on to hange.

And whan it is asseled so · I wote wel the sothe,
That Lucyferes lordeship · laste shal no lenger.'
'Late se thi lettres,' quod I · 'we mi3te the lawe knowe.'
Thanne plokked he forth a patent · a pece of an harde roche,
Wher-on were writen two wordes · on this wyse y-glosed,
Dilige deum et proximum tuum, etc.
This was the tixte trewly · I toke ful gode 3eme;
The glose was gloriously writen · with a gilte penne,
In hijs duobus mandatis tota lex pendet et prophetia.
'Ben here alle thi lordes lawes?' quod I · '3e, leue me wel,' he seyde,
'And who so worcheth after this writte · I wil vndertaken,
Shal neuere deuel hym dere · ne deth in soule greue.
For though I seye it my-self · I haue saued with this charme
Of men and of wommen · many score thousandes.'
'He seith soth,' seyde this heraud · 'I haue yfounde it ofte;
Lo here in my lappe · that leued on that charme,

Iosue and Iudith · and Iudas Macabeus,
3e, and sexty thousande bisyde forth · that ben nou3t seyen here.'

B. 11. were WCBY; weren O; was LR. 14. Ben WCBY; Been O; Is LR.

PASSUS XX.

Hic incipit passus tercius de Dobet.

'ICH am *Spes*, a spye,' quath he · 'and spire after a knyght,
That tooke me a maundement · vp-on the mounte of Synay,
To ruele alle reames ther-with · in right and in reison.
Loo, here the lettere,' quath he · 'in Latyn and in Ebrew,
That ich seye is sothe · seo ho so lyketh.'
'Ys hit a-seled?' ich seyde · 'may men seo the letteres?'
'Nay,' he seyde, 'ich seke hym · that hath the seel to kepe,
The whiche is Criste and Cristendome · and a croys ther-on to honge.
Were hit ther-with a-seeled · ich wote wel the sothe,
That Lucifers lordshup · ligge sholde ful lowe.'
'Leet se thi letteres,' quath ich · 'we myghte the lawe knowe.'
He plyghte forth a patente · a pece of an harde roche,
Wher-on was write two wordes · in this wise glosede;
Dilige deum et proximum tuum.
This was the tyxt treweliche · ich toke ful good gome;
The glose gloryousliche was wryte · wyth a gylt penne;
In his duobus mandatis pendet tota lex et prophete.
'Ys her al thy lordes lettere?' quath ich · 'ȝe, leue me,' he sayde,
'And ho so worcheth after this write · ich wol vnder-take,
Shal neuere deouel hym dere · ne deth in soule greue.
For thauh ich seye hit my-self · ich haue saued with this charme
Of men and of wymmen · meny score thousend.'
'He seith soth,' seide Faith · 'ich haue founde hit trewe.
Loo, her in my lappe,' quath Faith · 'that leyuede vp-on the lettere,
Bothe Iosue and Iudith · and Iudas Makabeus,
And sixe thousand mo,' quath Faith · 'ich can nat seye here names.'

C. 1. a spye IG; a spie FT; PE *om.* spire T; spere I; spirr P. 3. in (2) EIFT; PG *om.* 6. a-selede P. 13. two ET; to PFG. *tuum* T; PEIG *om.* 14. triweliche P. 15. *& prophete* EF; PITG *om.* 16. leue me he EIT; leyf he me P. 24. seye F; seiȝe T; seyn I; telle PE.

'ȝowre wordes aren wonderful,' quod I tho · 'which of ȝow is trewest,
And lelest to leue on · for lyf and for soule?
Abraham seith that he seigh · holy the Trinite,
Thre persones in parcelles · departable fro other,
And alle thre but o god · thus Abraham me tauȝte,
And hath saued that bileued so · and sory for her synnes,
He can nouȝte segge the somme · and some aren in his lappe.
What neded it thanne · a newe lawe to bigynne,
Sith the fyrst sufficeth · to sauacioun and to blisse?
And now cometh *Spes*, and speketh · that hath aspied the lawe,
And telleth nouȝte of the Trinitee · that toke hym his lettres,
'To byleue and louye · in o lorde almyȝty,
And sitthe riȝt as my-self · so louye alle peple.'
The gome that goth with o staf · he semeth in gretter hele
Than he that goth with two staues · to syȝte of vs alle.
And riȝte so, by the rode! · resoun me sheweth,
It is lyȝter to lewed men · a lessoun to knowe,
Than for to techen hem two · and to harde to lerne the leest!
It is ful harde for any man · on Abraham byleue,
And welawey worse ȝit · for to loue a shrewe!
It is liȝter to leue · in thre louely persones
Than for to louye and leue · as wel lorelles as lele.
Go thi gate,' quod I to *Spes* · 'so me god helpe!
Tho that lerneth thi lawe · wil litel while vsen it!"
And as we wenten thus in the weye · wordyng togyderes,
Thanne seye we a Samaritan · sittende on a mule,
Rydynge ful rapely · the riȝt weye we ȝeden,
Comynge fro a cuntre · that men called Ierico;
To a Iustes in Iherusalem · he chaced awey faste.
Bothe the heraud and Hope · and he mette at ones
Where a man was wounded · and with theues taken.
He myȝte neither steppe ne stonde · ne stere fote ne handes,
Ne helpe hym-self sothely · for semiuyf he semed,
And as naked as a nedle · and none helpe aboute hym.
Feith had first siȝte of hym · ac he flegh on syde,
And nolde nouȝt neighen hym · by nyne londes lengthe.
Hope cam hippyng after · that hadde so ybosted,

'ȝoure wordes aren wonderful,' quath ich · 'wher eny of ȝow be trewe
And leel to be-leyuen on · for body other for soule?
Abraam seith that he seih · holiche the Trinite,
Thre persones parcel-mele · departable from other,
And alle thre bote o god; · thus Abraam bereth wittnesse,
And ysauede that by-leyueth so · and soty for here synnes,
He can no certayn summe telle · and somme aren in hus lappe.
What neodeth hit thanne · a newe lawe to brynge,
Sutthe the furste suffisede · so by-leyue and be ysaued?
And now cometh her this *Spes* · and hath aspied the lawe,
That of the Trinite ne telleth · ne taketh mo persones
To god-hede, bote o god · and o god almyghty,
The whiche alle men aren holde · ouere alle thyng to honoure;
And sitthe to loue and to leue · for that lordes sake
Alle manere of men · as muche as ous self.
And for to louye and to leyue · in o lord almyghty.
Hit is lyght for lewede · and for lerede bothe;
Ac for to by-leyue in o lorde · that lyueth in thre persones,
And lereth that we louye sholde · as wel lyeres as leele—
Go thy gat,' quath ich to *Spes* · 'so me god helpe,
Tho that leorneth thi lawe · wolle litel while hit vsen!'
And as we wente in the way · thus wordyng of this matere,
Then seih we a Samaritan · cam syttynge on a mule,
Rydynge ful raply · the ryght way that we wente,
Comynge fram a contreie · that men callide Ierico,
To Iusten in Ierusalem · he Iacede awey ful faste.
Bothe Abraam and *Spes* · and he metten to-gederes
In a wilde wildernesse · wher theoues hadden bounde
A man, as me tho thouhte · to muche care thei brouhte.
For he ne myghte steppe ne stande · ne stere fot ne hondes,
Ne helpe hym-selue sothliche · for *semiuiuus* he semede,
And naked as a neelde · and non help aboute hym.
Faith on hym hadde furst a sight · ac he fleih a-syde,
And wolde nat neyhle hym · by nyne londes lengthe.
Hope cam hippyng after · that hadde so ybosted

C. 25. trywe P. 26. And al P; *but* EIFT *om.* al. 32. hit G; it IFT; PE *om.* 33. ysauede P. 39. muche MFT; meche P. 44. to EMIFTG; þo P. 46. wordyng of IMFTG; wondrynge in P. 51. and MIFTG; adde (*sic*) P.

How he with Moyses maundement · hadde many men y-holpe;
Ac whan he hadde siȝte of that segge · a-syde he gan hym drawe,
Dredfully, by this day! as duk · doth fram the faucoun.
Ac so sone so the Samaritan · hadde siȝte of this lede,
He liȝte adown of lyard · and ladde hym in his hande,
And to the wye he went · his woundes to biholde,
And parceyued bi his pous · he was in peril to deye,
And but-if he hadde recourere the rather · that rise shulde he neure;
And breyde to his boteles · and bothe he atamede;
Wyth wyn and with oyle · his woundes he wasshed,
Enbawmed hym and bonde his hed · and in his lappe hym layde,
And ladde hym so forth on lyard · to *lex-christi*, a graunge,
Wel six myle or seuene · biside the newe market;
Herberwed hym at an hostrye · and to the hostellere called,
And sayde, 'haue, kepe this man · til I come fro the Iustes,
And lo here syluer,' he seyde · 'for salue to his woundes.'
And he toke hym two pans · to lyflode as it were,
And seide, 'what he speneth more · I make the good here-after;
For I may nouȝt lette,' quod that leode · and lyarde he bistrydeth,
And raped hym to-Iherusalem-ward · the riȝte waye to ryde.
Faith folweth after faste · and fonded to mete hym,
And *Spes* spaklich hym spedde · spede if he myȝte,
To ouertake hym and talke to hym · ar thei to toun come.
And whan I seyȝ this, I soiourned nouȝte · but shope me to renne,
And suwed that Samaritan · that was so ful of pite,
And graunted hym to ben his grome · 'gramercy,' he seyde,
'Ac thi frende and thi felawe,' quod he · 'thow fyndest me at nede.'
And I thanked hym tho · and sith I hym tolde,
How that Feith fleigh awey · and *Spes* his felaw bothe,
For siȝte of the sorweful man · that robbed was with theues.
'Haue hem excused,' quod he · 'her help may litel auaille;
May no medcyn on molde · the man to hele brynge,
Neither Feith ne fyn Hope · so festred ben his woundis,
With-out the blode of a barn · borne of a mayde.

B. 68. *This line is in* R *only.*

Hou he with Moyses maundement · hade meny men holpen;
And whanne he hadde siht of this sike · asyde he gan drawe,
And dredfulliche with-drow hym · and dorste go no nerre.
Ac as sone so the Samaritan · hadde sighte of that syke,
He alyghte a-non of lyarde · and ladde hym in hus hondes,
And to this wye he wente · hus wondes to beholde.
He perceyuede by his pous · he was in peril to deye,
And bote he hadde recouer the rather · that rise sholde he neuere.

He vnbokelede hus boteles · and bothe he a-tamede;
With wyn and with oile · hus wondes he can lithe;
Enbaumede hym and bond hus heuede · and on bayarde hym sette,
And ledde hym forth to *lauacrum* · *lex-dei*, a graunge,
Is sixe myle other seuene · by-syde the newe markett,
And lefte hym there a lechinge · to lyuen if he myghte;
And took two pans to the hosteler · to take kepe to hym,
'And that goth mor for hus medicine · ich make the good azenwarde,
For ich may nat lette,' quath that lede · and lyarde he bystrydeth,

And rapede hym to ryde · the righte wey to Ierusalem.
Bothe Faith and hus felawe *Spes* · folweden faste after;

Ac ich suwede the Samaritan · and seide hou thei bothe
Weren afered, and flowen · fro the man y-wonded.
'Haue hem excused,' quath the Samaritan · 'here help wolde nat vaille,
Ne medecine vnder molde · the man to hele brynge,
Nother Faith ne fyn Hope · so festered aren hus wondes;
With-oute the blod of a barn · he beoth nouht ysaued,
The whiche barn mot neodes · be bore of a mayde,

C. 62. an (*for* and) P. 65. wye E; wy F; wiȝ T; weye P. holde (*for* beholde) P. 76. ich E; i MIFT; P *om.* þat EIMFT; þe P. 80. y-wondede P· 84. a EIMFTG; þat P.

And be he bathed in that blode · baptised, as it were,
And thanne plastred with penaunce · and passioun of that babi,
He shulde stonde and steppe; · ac stalworth worth he neure,
Tyl he haue eten al the barn · and his blode ydronke.
For went neuere wy in this worlde · thorw that wildernesse,
That he ne was robbed or rifled · rode he there or ȝede,
Saue Faith, and his felaw · *Spes*, and my-selue,
And thi-self now, and such · as suwen owre werkis.
For outlawes in the wode · and vnder banke lotyeth,
And may vch man se · and gode merke take,
Who is bihynde and who bifore · and who ben on hors,
For he halt hym hardyer on horse · than he that is a fote.
For he seigh me, that am Samaritan · suwen Feith and his felaw
On my caple that hatte *Caro* · (of mankynde I toke it),
He was vnhardy, that harlot · and hudde hym *in inferno*.
Ac ar this day thre dayes · I dar vndertaken,
That he worth fettred, that feloune · fast with cheynes,
And neure eft greue grome · that goth this ilke gate;
O mors, ero mors tua, etc.,
And thanne shal Feith be forester here · and in this fritth walke,
And kennen out comune men · that knoweth nouȝte the contre,
Which is the weye that ich went · and wherforth to Iherusalem.
And Hope the hostelleres man shal be · there the man lith an helynge;
And alle that fieble and faynt be · that Faith may nouȝt teche,
Hope shal lede hem forth with loue · as his lettre telleth,
And hostel hem and hele · thorw holicherche bileue,
Tyl I haue salue for alle syke · and thanne shal I retourne,
And come aȝein bi this contree · and confort alle syke
That craueth it or coueiteth it · and cryeth there-after.
For the barne was born in Bethleem · that with his blode shal saue
Alle that lyueth in faith, and folweth · his felawes techynge.'
'A! swete syre!' I seyde tho · 'wher shal I byleue,
As Feith and his felawe · enfourmed me bothe?
In thre persones departable · that perpetuel were euere,
And alle thre but o god · thus Abraham me tauȝte;—
And Hope afterwarde · he bad me to louye

B. 111. *O—tua* in R only. 124. shal I YCB; I shal LWR.

And with the blod of that barn · embaumed and baptized.
And thauh he steppe and stande · right strong worth he neuere
Til he haue eten al that barn · and hus blod dronken,
And ȝut be plastred with pacience · when fondynges hym prykieth--
For wente neuere man this way · that he ne was here rifled,
Saue my-selue sothliche · and suche as ich louede—
And ȝut be-leyue leelly · vpon that litel baby,
That his likame schal lechen · atte laste ous alle.'

'A! syre,' ich seide · 'shul nat we by-leyue,
As Faith and hus felawe *Spes* · enformede me bothe,
In thre persones, a parceles · departable from other,
And all thre bote o god? · thus Abraham me tauhte.
And Hope afterwarde · of god more me tolde,

C. 86. embaumede P. baptizede P. 88. heten (*for* eten) P. 89. plastrede P. 90. man MIT; men PEF. riflede P. 92. P *ins.* to *before* beleyue. 93. schal EMIFG; P *om.* 94. weye (*for* we) P.

O god wyth al my good · and alle gomes after,
Louye hem lyke my-selue · ac owre lorde aboue alle.'
'After Abraham,' quod he · 'that heraud of armes,
Sette faste thi faith · and ferme bileue.
And, as Hope hi3te the · I hote that thow louye
Thyn euene-crystene euermore · euene-forth with thiselfe.
And if conscience carpe there-a3ein · or kynde witte oyther,
Or heretykes with argumentz · thin honde thow hem shewe;
For god is after an hande · yhere now and knowe it.
The fader was fyrst, as a fyst · with o fynger foldynge,
Tyl hym loued and lest · to vnlosen his fynger,
And profre it forth as with a paume · to what place it sholde.
The paume is purely the hande · and profreth forth the fyngres
To mynystre and to make · that my3te of hande knoweth,
And bitokneth trewly · telle who so liketh,
The holygost of heuene; · he is as the paume.
The fyngres that fre ben · to folde and to serue,
Bitokneth sothly the sone · that sent was til erthe,
That toched and tasted · atte techynge of the paume
Seynt Marie a mayde · and mankynde lau3te;
Qui conceptus est de spiritu sancto, natus, etc.
The fader is thanne as a fust · with fynger to touche,
Quia omnia traham ad me ipsum, etc.,
Al that the paume parceyueth · profitable to fele.
Thus ar thei alle but one · as it an hande were,
And thre sondry si3tes · in one shewynge.
The paume, for he putteth forth fyngres · and the fust bothe,
Ri3t so redily · reson it sheweth,
How he that is holygoste · sire and sone preueth.
And as the hande halt harde · and al thynge faste
Thorw foure fyngres and a thombe · forth with the paume,
Ri3te so the fader and the sone · and seynt spirit the thridde
Halt al the wyde worlde · with-in hem thre,
Bothe welkne and the wynde · water and erthe,
Heuene and helle · and al that there is inne.
Thus it is, nedeth no man · to trowe non other,
That thre thinges bilongeth · in owre lorde of heuene,
And aren serelepes by hem-self · asondry were neure,

B. 136. hem WR; hym LCR. 148. *natus* CBY; LWR *om.* 164. serelepes Y; serelopes W; *miswritten* serclepes L.

And lerede me for hus loue · to louye al man-kynde,
And hym abouen alle · and hem as my-selue;
Nother lacky ne alose · ne leyue that ther were
Eny wickeder in this worlde · than y were myself,
And most imparfit of alle persones · and pacientliche suffre
Alle manere of men · and thauh ich myghte me venge,
I sholde tholie and thonken hem · that me vuel wolde.'
'He seide soth,' quath the Samaritan · 'and so ich rede the also.
And as Abraam the olde · of o god the taughte,
Loke thow louye and by-leyue · al thy lyf-tyme.
And if kynde witt carpe her-aȝen · and other kynne thouhtes,
Other heretikes with argumens · thyn hond thou hem shewe!
For god that al by-gan · in gynnynge of the worlde,
Ferde furst as a fust · and ȝut is, as ich leyue,
Mundum pugillo continens,
As with a fust with o fynger · yfolde to-gederes,
Til hym liked and luste · to vnlose the fynger,
And profrede hit forth as with the paume · to what place it sholde.
The paume is the pith of the honde · and profreth forth the fyngres,
To mynystre and to make · that myght of hond knoweth,
And bytokneth trewely · telle ho so liketh,
The holy gost of heuene; · he is as the paume.
The fyngres that freo beo · to folden and to clycchen
By-tokneth sothliche the sone · that sente was tyl erthe,
Touchede and tastede · at techynge of the paume,
Seynte Marie, a mayde · and mankynde lauhte;
Natus ex Maria uirgine.
The fader is thenne as the fust · with fynger and with paume,
To huden and to holde · as holy writ telleth;
Omnia traham ad me ipsum.
Al that the fynger gropeth · graythly he grypeth,
Bote yf that that he gropeth · greue the paume.
Thus are thei alle bote on · as hit an hande were,
A fust with a fynger · and a foll paume.

C. 102. wordle P. 107. tauhgte P. 117. mynestre P. 118. bytockneþ P. 120. folden E; folde MIFTG; felden P. 121. sotthliche P. 125. wriȝth (*for* writ) P.

Namore than myn hande may · meue with-outen fyngeres.
And as my fust is ful honde · yfolde togideres,
So is the fader a ful god · formeour and shepper,
Tu fabricator omnium, etc.,
And al the myȝte myd hym is · in makyng of thynges.
The fyngres fourmen a ful hande · to purtreye or peynten
Keruynge and compassynge · as crafte of the fyngres;
Riȝt so is the sone · the science of the fader,
And ful god, as is the fader · no febler ne no better.
The paume is þurelich the hande · hath power bi hymselue,
Otherwyse than the wrythen fuste · or werkmanschip of fyngres;
For the paume hath powere · to put oute alle the ioyntes,
Anu to vnfolde the folden fuste · for hym it bilongeth;
And receyue that the fyngres recheth · and refuse bothe,
Whan he feleth the fust · and the fyngres wille.
So is the holygoste god · nother gretter ne lasse
Than is the sire and the sone · and in the same myȝte,
And alle ar thei but o god · as is myn hande and my fyngres,
Vnfolden or folden · my fuste and myn paume,
Al is but an hande · how so I torne it.
Ac who is herte in the hande · euene in the myddes,
He may receyue riȝt nouȝte · resoun it sheweth;
For the fyngres, that folde shulde · and the fuste make,
For peyne of the paume · powere hem failleth
To clucche or to clawe · to clyppe or to holde.
Were the myddel of myn honde · ymaymed or yperssched,
I shulde receyue riȝte nouȝte · of that I reche myȝte.
Ac though my thombe and my fyngres · bothe were to-shullen,
And the myddel of myn hande · with-oute male ese,
In many kynnes maneres · I myȝte my-self helpe,
Bothe meue and amende · though alle my fyngres oke.
Bi this skil, me thynketh · I se an euydence,
That who so synneth in the seynt spirit · assoilled worth he neure,
Noither here ne elles-where · as I herde telle,
Qui peccat in spiritum sanctum, nunquam, etc.,
For he prikketh god as in the paume · that *peccat in spiritum sanctum.*

B. 176—178. for hym—fust and *is in* R *only.* 188. clucche WY; cluche R; clicche L. 195. þynketh WCYB; þynke L; *see* l. 278. 197, 198. *spiritu sancto* LWCYB; *spiritum sanctum* C_2. *nunquam* is in R only.

And as the fust is ful hand · yfolde to-gederes,
So is the fader a ful god · the furste of hem alle.
And as my fust is furst · er ich my fyngers shewe,
So is he fader and former · the furste of alle thynges;
Tu fabricator omnium;
And alle the myghte with hym is · was, and worth euere.
The fyngres is ful hand · for, failled thei here thombe,
Portrey ne peynte · parfitliche, ich leyue,
Sholde no wry3t worche · were he aweye.
Ry3t so, faillede the sone · the syre be ne myghte,
Ne holde, ne helpe · ne hente that he louede;
Dextre dei tu digitus.
The paume is pureliche the honde · and hath power by hym-self,
Other-wise than the wrythen fust · other werkmanshup of fyngres.
For the paume hath power · to putten oute the Ioyntes,
And to vnfolde the fust · for hym hit bylongeth,
And receyuen that the fyngres rechen · and refuse, yf hym liketh,
Al that the fyngres and the fust · felen and touchen,
Beo he greued with here gripe · the holy gost let falle.
Thus is the holigost god · nother grettoure ne lasse
Thenne is the syre other the sone · and of the same myghte,
And alle thre nys bote o god · as my hand and my fyngres,
Vnfolde other yfolde · a fust-wyse other elles,
Al is hit bote on hand · hou so y turne hit.
Ac ho so is hurt in the hand · euene in the myddes,
He may receyue ryght nouht · reson hit sheweth;
For the fyngeres that folde sholden · and the fust make,
For peyne of the paume · power hem failleth
To clucche other to clawe · to cluppe other to holde.
Were the myddel of myn hand · with-oute mal ese,
In menye kynne manere · ich myghte my-self helpe,
Bothe meue and amende · thauh alle my fyngres oken.
By this *simile,*' he seide · 'ich seo an euidence,
That ho so synegeth in the *seynt espirit* · asoilled worth he neuere,
Nother her ne elles-wher · as ich herde telle;
Qui peccat in spiritum sanctum neque remittetur ei, etc.
He priketh god as in the paume · that *peccat in spiritum sanctum.*

C. 130. yfoolde P. 133. an (*for* and) P. 137. wry3th P. 138. Ry3ght P. 146. greueued P. 155. hem M1FG; hym PET. 161. assoillede P. 162. *neque—ei* is in F only.

For god the fader is as a fuste · the sone is as a fynger,
The holy goste of heuene · is, as it were, the pawme.
So who so synneth in seynt spirit · it semeth that he greueth
God, that he grypeth with · and wolde his grace quenche.
And to a torche or a tapre · the Trinitee is lykned;
As wex and a weke · were twyned togideres,
And thanne a fyre flaumende · forth oute of bothe;
And as wex and weyke · and hote fyre togyderes
Fostren forth a flaumbe · and a feyre leye,
So doth the sire and the sone · and also *spiritus sanctus*
Fostren forth amonges folke · loue and bileue,
That alkyn Crystene · clenseth of synnes.
And as thow seest some tyme · sodeynliche a torche,
The blase there-of yblowe out · ȝet brenneth the weyke,
With-oute leye or liȝte · that the macche brenneth,
So is the holygost god · and grace with-oute mercy
To alle vnkynde creatures · that coueite to destruye
Lele loue other lyf · that owre lorde shapte.
And as glowande gledes · gladieth nouȝte this werkmen,
That worchen and waken · in wyntres niȝtes,
As doth a kex or a candel · that cauȝte hath fyre and blaseth,
Namore doth sire ne sone · ne seynt spirit togyderes,
Graunteth no grace · ne forȝifnesse of synnes,
Til the holi goste gynne · to glowe and to blase.
So that the holygoste · gloweth but as a glede,
Tyl that lele loue · ligge on hym and blowe,
And thanne flaumbeth he as fyre · on fader and on *filius*,
And melteth her myȝte in-to mercy · as men may se in wyntre
Ysekeles in eueses · thorw hete of the sonne,
Melteth in a mynut-while · to myst and to watre;
So grace of the holygoste · the grete myȝte of the Trinite
Melteth in-to mercy · to mercyable, and to non other.
And as wex with-outen more · on a warme glede
Wil brennen and blasen · be thei to-gyderes,
And solacen hem that may se · that sitten in derkenesse,

C. 167. queynche P. 168. likenede P. 169. were twyned I; were tweyned M; were twynnyd T; and warme fur (*by confusion with* l. 171) PEG. 171. and warm fuyr MG; and warme fure I; were twynede P (*see* l. 169).

For the fader is as the fust · the sone is as the fyngres,
The holy gost of heuene · he is as the paume.
So ho so synegeth aȝens the *seynte espirit* · hit semeth that he greueth
God, ther he gripeth · and wolde hus grace quenche.
For to a torche other to a taper · the Trinite is likened,
As wexe and a weke · were twyned to-gederes,
And fuyr flaumed · forth of hem bothe;
And as wex and weke · and warm fuyr to-gederes
Fostren forth a flaume · and a fayre lye,
That serueth these swynkeres · to seo by a nyghtes,
So doth the syre and the sone · and *seynt espirit* to-gederes,
Fostren forth a-mong folke · fyn loue and by-leyue,
That alle kynne Crystene · clanseth of synne.
And as thou suxt some tyme · sodenliche, of a torche
The blase beo blowen out · ȝut brenneth the weke,
With-outen lye and lyght · lith fuyr in the macche,
So is the holy gost god · and grace with-oute mercy
To alle vnkynde creatures · that coueyten to distruye
Leel lycame, and lif · that oure lorde shupte.
And as glowynge gledes · gladeth nat these workemen
That worchen and waken · in wynteres nyghtes,
As doth a kyx other a candele · that cauht hath fuyr, and blaseth,
No more doth the syre ne the sone · ne *seynte espirit* to-gederes
Graunten eny grace · ne for-gyuenesse of synnes,
Til the holy gost by-gynne · to glowen and blase.
So that the holy gost · gloweth bote as a glede,
Til that loue and by-leyue · leelliche to hym blowe.
Thenne flammeth he as fuyr · on fader and on *filius*,
And melteth myghte in-to mercy · as we may seo a wynter,
Isykles in euesynges · thorgh hete of the sonne
Melteth in a mynt-while · to myst and to water;
So grace of the holy gost · melteth al to mercy,
The grete myghte of the Trinite · to mercyable, and to none othere.
And as wex with-oute more · vpon a warm glede
Wol brennen and blasen · beo thei to-gyderes,
And solasen hem that mowe nat seon · syttyng in deorknesse,

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179. lith IFMTG; lyght P. 183. glades P (*see* l. 189). 192. wey (*for* we) P.

So wole the fader forȝif · folke of mylde hertes
That reufulliche repenten · and restitucioun make,
In as moche as thei mowen · amenden and payen.
And if it suffice nouȝte for assetz · that in suche a wille deyeth,
Mercy for his mekenesse · wil make good the remenaunte.
And as the weyke and fyre · wil make a warme flaumbe
For to myrthe men with · that in merke sitten,
So wil Cryst of his curteisye · and men crye hym mercy,
Bothe forȝiue and forȝete · and ȝet bidde for vs
To the fader of heuene · forȝyuenesse to haue.
Ac hew fyre at a flynte · fowre hundreth wyntre,
Bot thow haue towe to take it with · tondre or broches,
Al thi laboure is loste · and al thi longe trauaille;
For may no fyre flaumbe make · faille it his kynde.
So is the holy gost god · and grace with-outen mercy
To alle vnkynde creatures · Cryst hym-self witnesseth,
Amen dico vobis, nescio vos, etc.
Be vnkynde to thin euene-cristene · and al that thow canst bidden,
Delen and do penaunce · day and nyȝte euere,
And purchace al the pardoun · of Pampiloun and Rome,
And indulgences ynowe · and be *ingratus* to thi kynde,
The holy goste hereth the nouȝt · ne helpe may the by resoun;
For vnkyndenesse quencheth hym · that he can nouȝte shyne,
Ne brenne ne blase clere · for blowynge of vnkyndenesse.
Poule the apostle · preueth whȅr I lye,
Si linguis hominum loquar, etc.
For-thy beth war, ȝe wyse men · that with the worlde deleth,
That riche ben and resoun knoweth · reuleth wel ȝowre soule.
Beth nouȝte vnkynde, I conseille ȝow · to ȝowre euene-crystene.
For many of ȝow riche men · bi my soule, men telleth,
ȝe brenne, but ȝe blaseth nouȝte · that is a blynde bekene;
Non omnis qui dicit domine, domine, intrabit, etc.
Diues deyed dampned · for his vnkyndenesse
Of his mete and his moneye · to men that it neded.

B. 258. worlde WCRYB; wolde L.

C. 203. wile P. deyn P. 204. *From* I; *also in* EMFTG; P *omits this line.* 205. P *om.* as. 206. meerk P. 213. PE *ins.* no *before* flamme. 214. þe EMIFTG; P *om.* 215. wittnesse P. 220. þe IMFTG; PE *om.*

So wol the fader for-ȝyuen · folke of mylde hertes,
That rufulliche repenten · and restitucion maken,
In as muche as thei mowen · amenden and payen,
And yf hit sufficith nat for a-seth · that in suche wille deyen,
Mercy, for his mekenesse · wil make good the remenant.
And as the wicke and the warme fuyr · wol make a fayr flamme
For to murthen men with · that in merke sytten;
So wol Crist, of hus curtesye · and men crye hym mercy,
Bothe for-ȝeuen and for-ȝuten · and ȝut bydde for ous
To the fader of heuene · for-ȝyuenesse to haue.
Ac hewe fuyr of a flynt · four hundred wynter;
Bote thou haue tache to take hit with · tunder and broches,
Al thy labour is lost · and al thy long trauayl;
For may no fuyr flamme make · faille hit hus kynde.
So is the holigost god · and grace with-oute mercy
To alle vnkynde creatures · as Crist hym-self wittnesseth;
Amen dico uobis, nescio vos.
Beo vnkynde to thyn emcrystene · and al that thow canst bidde,
Dele and do penaunce · day and nyght euere,
And porchase al the pardoun · of Paumpelon and of Rome,
And indulgences ynowe · and be ingrat to thy kynde,
The holygost huyreth the nat · ne helpeth the, be thow certayn.
For vnkyndenesse quencheth hym · that he can nat shyne,
Ne brenne, ne blase cleer · for blowynge of vnkyndenesse.
Seynt Paul the apostel · proueth wher ich lye;
Si linguis hominum loquar, etc.
For-thi beoth war, ȝe wyse men · that with the worlde deleth,
That ryche beon and reson knowen · reuleth wel ȝoure soule.
Beoth nat vnkynde, ich consaile ȝou · to ȝoure emcristene.
For menye of ȝow ryche men · by my saule, ich lye nat,
ȝe brenneth, ac ȝe blaseth nat · and that is a blynde bekne;
Non omnis qui dicit michi domine, domine, intrabit in regnum celorum.
Mynne ȝe nat, riche men · to which a meschaunce
That *Dives* deyed, and dampned was · for hus vnkyndenesse
Of hus mete and of hus moneye · to men that hit neodede?

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221. queyncheþ P. can EIFT; ne can M; P *om.* 223. wer P. 224. wordle P. 227. ȝow IMFTG; PE *om.* ryke (*for* ryche) P; *see* l. 225. 228. *michi* in F only. 230. was TG; is M; PEI *om.*

Vch a riche I rede · rewarde at hym take,
And gyueth 3owre good to that god · that grace of ariseth.
For thei that ben vnkynde to his · hope I none other,
But thei dwelle there *Diues* is · dayes with-outen ende.
Thus is vnkyndenesse the contrarie · that quencheth, as it were,
The grace of the holy gooste · goddes owne kynde.
For that kynde dothe, vnkynde fordoth · as these cursed theues,
Vnkynde cristene men · for coueityse and enuye,
Sleeth a man for his moebles · wyth mouth or wyth handes.
For that the holygoste hath to kepe · tho harlotes destroyeth,
The which is lyf and loue · the leye of mannes bodye.
For euery manere good man · may be likned to a torche,
Or elles to a tapre · to reuerence the trinitee;
And who morthereth a good man · me thynketh, by myn inwyt,
He fordoth the leuest ly3te · that owre lorde loueth.
Ac 3ut in many mo maneres · men offenden the holy goste;
Ac this is the worste wyse · that any wi3te my3te

B. 267. þei WCBY; LR *om.*

ȝut wan he hit nat with wrang · ne with queynte sleythes,
Bote ryȝtfulliche, as men rat · al hus rychesse cam hym,
And on hym-self, seith the book · sotelede hou he myghte
Most lordliche lyuen · and leet hus lycame werie
Clothes of most cost · as clerkes bereth wittnesse;
Epulabatur splendide, et induebatur bisso et purpura.
And for he was a nigard · to the neodful poure,
For godes treitour he is tolde · for al hus trewe catel,
And dampned is and dwelleth · with the deuel in helle.
Suththe he with-oute wiles wan · and wel myghte a-temye
Lordliche for to lyuen · and likyngliche be clothed,
And is in helle for al that · how wole riche nouthe
Excuse hem that beth vnkynde · and ȝut here catel wonne
With wiles and with luther wittes · and ȝut wollen nat atemye
To gon semliche ne sitte · sith holy writ techeth,
That that wikkedliche is wonne · to wasten hit, and to make frendes?
Facite uobis amicos de mammona iniquitatis.
Eche a riche man, ich rede · reward her-of take,
And ȝeueth ȝoure good to that god · that grace of ariseth.
For ȝe that ben vnhende to hyse · hope ȝe none other,
Bote to dwelle ther *Dives* is · dayes with-outen ende.
Thus is vnkyndenesse kid · and aquencheth, as hit were,
The grace of the holygost · godes owene kynde;
For that that kynde doth · vnkynde for-doth.
Acorsede theoues, vnkynde Cristene men · for couetise and enuye
Sleeth a man for hus meobles · with mouth other with handes;
For that the holy gost hath to kepe · suche harlotes destruyen,
The whiche is lyf and loue · the lye of mannes body.
For euery maner good man · may be lykned to a torche,
Other elles to a taper · to reuerence with the trinite;
And ho so morthereth a good man · me thynketh, by myn in-witt,
He for-doth the light that oure lorde · loketh to haue worsshep of.
And ȝut in mo maneres · men offendeth the holy gost;
Ac this is the worste wise · that eny wight myghte

C. 233. ryȝthfulliche P. rat EMIT; *miswritten* þat P. 234. soutelede P. 240. whiles (*for* wiles) P. 245. sittþ P. 248. goud P. 251. kid T; PEMFI *om.* aqueyncheþ P. 254. vnkende P; *but see* l. 253. 255. Sleehþ P. meobles EF; mebles MIG; noebles P. 258. lycknede P. 259. to (1) EMFTG; PI *om.* 260. morþrerþ P. goud P. by EIFG; be MT; in P. 263. whight P.

Synnen aȝein the seynt spirit · assenten to destruye,
For coueityse of any kynnes thinge · that Cryst dere bouȝte.
How myȝte he axe mercy · or any mercy hym helpe,
That wykkedlich and willefullich · wolde mercy anynte?
Innocence is nexte god · and nyȝte and day it crieth,
'Veniaunce, veniaunce · forȝiue be it neuere,
That shent vs and shadde owre blode · forshapte vs, as it were;
Vindica sanguinem iustorum!'
Thus 'veniaunce, veniaunce' · verrey charite asketh;
And sith holicherche and charite · chargeth this so sore,
Leue I neure that owre lorde wil loue · that charite lakketh,
Ne haue pite for any preyere · there that he pleyneth.'
'I pose I hadde synned so · and shulde now deye,
And now am sory, that so · the seint spirit agulte,
Confesse me, and crye his grace · god, that al made,
And myldliche his mercy axe · myȝte I nouȝte be saued?'
'ȝus,' seide the Samaritan · 'so wel thow myȝte repente,
That riȝtwisnesse thorw repentance · to reuthe myȝte torne.
Ac it is but selden yseye · there sothenesse bereth witnesse,
Any creature that is coupable · afor a kynges iustice,
Be raunsoned for his repentaunce · there alle resoun hym dampneth.
For there that partye pursueth · the pele is so huge,
That the kynge may do no mercy · til bothe men acorde,
And eyther haue equite · as holy writ telleth;
Numquam dimittitur peccatum, donec restituatur ablatum.
Thus it fareth bi suche folke · that falsely al her lyues
Euel lyuen and leten nouȝte · til lyf hem forsake;
Drede of desperacion · dryueth a-weye thanne grace,
That mercy in her mynde · may nauȝt thanne falle;
Good hope, that helpe shulde · to wanhope torneth—
Nouȝt of the nounpowere of god · that he ne is myȝtful
To amende al that amys is · and his mercy grettere
Than alle owre wykked werkes · as holiwrit telleth,
Misericordia eius super omnia opera eius.

B. 304. *donec* is in Y only; the two words following are supplied from Pass. v. 279. 307, 308. *These lines are in* R *only.*

Synegen a-ȝens the *seynt espirit* · assenten to destruye,
For couetyse of eny kynne thyng · that Cryst dere boughte.
How myghte he aske mercy · other eny mercy hym defende,
That wikkidliche and wilfulliche · wolde mercy anyente?
Innocence is next god · and nyght and day hit cryeth,
'Veniaunce! venſaunce! · for-ȝeue be hit neuere,
That shende ous and shadde oure blod · for-shupte ous, as hit semede;
Vindica sanguinem iustorum!'
Thus 'veniaunce! veniaunce!' · verray charite asketh;
And suthen charite, that holychurche is · chargeth this so sore,
Leyue ich neuere that oure lorde · atte laste ende
Wol louye that lyf that loue · and leel charite destruyen.'
'Ich pose ich hadde syneged so,' quath ich · 'and shold nouthe deye,'
And now am ich sory that ich so · the *seynt espirit* agulte,
Confesse me and crye hus grace · god that al made,
And myldeliche hus mercy aske · myghte ich nat be saued?'
'ȝus,' seide the Samaritan · 'so thou myghtest repente,
That ryghtwisnesse thorgh repentaunce · to reuthe myghte turne.
Ac hit is bote selde seyn · ther sothnesse bereth wittnesse
Eny creature be coupable · by-for a kynges Iustice,
Be yraunsoned for repentaunce · ther al reson hym dampneth.
Ther that partye porsueth · the apeel is so huge,
May no kynge mercy graunt · til bothe men a-corden,
That ayther partye haue equite · as holy writt witnesseth;
Nunquam dimittitur peccatum, etc.
Thus hit fareth by suche folke · that folwen here owene wil,
That vuel lyuen and leten nat · til hem for-sake synne.
Drede of desperacion · thenne dryueth a-wey grace,
That mercy in here mynde · may nat thenne falle;
For good hope that hem helpe sholde · to wanhope turneth,
And nat of the nounpower of god · that he nys ful of myghte
To amenden al that amys is · and hus mercy grettour
Than alle oure wikkede werkus · as holy writ telleth,
Misericordia eius super omnia opera eius.

C. 272. P *ins.* þat *before* charite. 276. PE *ins.* dude *after* so. PE *ins.* to *before* agulte. 280. tow (*for* to) P. 281. seild P. 283. yraunsende P. 286. equite EITG; a quyte P. witnesse P. 291. whamhope (*sic*) P. 292. nounpower F; noun-poer I; vnpower PE.

Ac, ar his riȝtwisnesse to reuthe tourne · some restitucioun bihoueth;
His sorwe is satisfaccioun · for hym that may nouȝte paye.
Thre thinges there ben · that doth a man by strengthe
Forto fleen his owne hous · as holywryt sheweth.
That one is a wikked wyf · that wil nouȝt be chasted;
Her fiere fleeth fro hyr · for fere of her tonge.
And if his hous be vnhiled · and reyne on his bedde,
He seketh and seketh · til he slepe drye.
And whan smoke and smolder · smyt in his syȝte,
It doth hym worse than his wyf · or wete to slepe.
For smoke and smolder · smyteth in his eyen,
Til he be blere-nyed or blynde · and hors in the throte,
Cougheth, and curseth · that Cryst gyf hem sorwe
That sholde brynge in better wode · or blowe it til it brende.
Thise thre that I telle of · ben thus to vnderstonde;
The wyf is owre wikked flesshe · that wil nouȝt be chasted,
For kynde cleueth on hym euere · to contrarie the soule.
And thowgh it falle, it fynt skiles · that frelete it made;
And that is liȝtly forȝeuen · and forȝeten bothe,
To man that mercy asketh · and amende thenketh.
The reyne that reyneth · there we reste sholde,
Ben sikenesses and sorwes · that we suffren oft,
As Powle the apostle · to the peple tauȝte,
Virtus in infirmitate perficitur, etc.
And thowgh that men make · moche deol in her angre,
And ben inpacient in here penaunce · pure resoun knoweth,
That thei han cause to contrarie · by kynde of her sykenesse;
And liȝtlich owre lorde · at her lyues ende,
Hath mercy on suche men · that so yuel may suffre.
Ac the smoke and the smolder · that smyt in owre eyghen,
That is coueityse and vnkyndenesse · that quencheth goddes mercy.
For vnkyndenesse is the contrarie · of alkynnes resoun;
For there nys syke ne sori · ne non so moche wrecche,
That he ne may louye, and hym lyke · and lene of his herte
Good wille and good worde · bothe wisshen and willen

B. 323. in WYB; LRC *om.* 330. þat WCRBY; þe L. 337. ben W; be R; LCYB *om.* 346. Goed (*for* Good) L.

Ac er hus rightwisnesse to reuthe turne · restitucion hit maketh;
As sorwe of herte is satisfaccion · for suche as may nat paye.
Ac thre thynges ther beoth · that doth a man to sterte
Out of his owene hous · as holy writ sheweth.
That on is a wikkede wif · that wol nat be chasted;
Hure fere fleeth fro huere · for fere of huere tounge.
And yf hus hous be vnheled · and reyne on hus bedde,
He seketh and seketh · til he slepe drye.
Ac when smoke and smorthre · smyt in hus eyen,
Hit doth hym wors than hus wyf · other wete to slepe.
For thorw smoke and smorthre · smerteth hus syghte,
Tyl he be bler-eyed other blynde · and the borre in hus throte,
Koweth and corseth · that Crist ȝyue hym sorwe
That sholde brynge yn bettere wode · other blowe til hit brente.
These thre that ich telle of · thus beoth to vnderstonde;
The wif is oure wikkede fleshe · that wol nat be chasted,
For kynde clyueth on hym euere · to contrarie the soule.
And thauh he falle, he fynt skyles · that frelete hit made;
And that is lyghtliche for-ȝyue · and for-ȝute bothe
To man, that mercy asketh · and amende thenketh.
Ac the reyn that reyneth · ther we reste sholde,
Beoth syknesses and other sorwes · that we suffren ofte.
As seynt Paul the apostel · in hus pistles techeth,
Virtus in infirmitate perficitur.
And thauh men maken · muche deol in here angre,
And beo inpacient in here penaunces · pure reson knoweth,
That thei han cause to contrarien · by kynde of here syknesse;
And lightliche oure lorde · at here lyues ende
Hath mercy of suche men · that vuel may suffrye.
Ac the smoke and the smorthre · that smyt in oure eyen,
That is couetise and vnkyndenesse · which quencheth godes mercy.
For vnkyndnesse is contrarie · of alle kynne reson;
For ther ne is syk ne sory · ne non so muche wrecche,
That he ne may louye, and hym lyke · and lene of hus herte
Good wil, good worde · bothe wusshen and wylnen

C. 299. chastede P. 301. vnhelede P. reyne EFTG; ryne PI; *see* l. 315. on EMIFTG; in P. 302. til IFTG; er P. 304. whete P. 306. blereyde P. 308. bryngge P. 310. þat EMG; P *om.* chastede P. 315. reyneþ EIFT; ryneþ P. 316. ofte MFT; ouht P. 317. P ins. *Nam* before *Virtus*. 323. smyȝt P. 328. Goude P. goud P. whusshen P.

Alle manere men · mercy and forȝifnesse,
And louye hem liche hym-self · and his lyf amende.—
I may no lenger lette,' quod he · and lyarde he pryked,
And went away as wynde · and there-with I awaked.

PASSUS XVIII.

Passus xviij^{us}, et tercius de Dobet.

WOLLEWARD and wete-shoed · went I forth after,
As a reccheles renke · that of no wo reccheth,
And ȝede forth lyke a lorel · al my lyf-tyme,
Tyl I wex wery of the worlde · and wylned eft to slepe,
And lened me to a lenten · and longe tyme I slepte;
And of Crystes passioun and penaunce · the peple that of-rauȝte,
Reste me there, and rutte faste · tyl *ramis-palmarum;*
Of gerlis and of *gloria laus* · gretly me dremed,
And how *osanna* by orgonye · olde folke songen.
One semblable to the Samaritan · and some-del to Piers the Plowman,
Barfote on an asse bakke · botelees cam prykye,
Wyth-oute spores other spere · spakliche he loked,
As is the kynde of a kynȝte · that cometh to be dubbed,
To geten hem gylte spores · or galoches ycouped.
Thanne was Faith in a fenestre · and cryde *'a! fili Dauid!'*
As doth an heraude of armes · whan auntrous cometh to iustes.
Olde Iuwes of Ierusalem · for Ioye thei songen,
Benedictus qui venit in nomine domini.
Thanne I frayned at Faith · what al that fare be-mente,
And who sholde Iouste in Iherusalem · 'Iesus,' he seyde,
'And fecche that the fende claymeth · Piers fruit the Plowman.'
'Is Piers in this place?' quod I · and he preynte on me,
'This Iesus of his gentrice · wole Iuste in Piers armes,
In his helme and in his haberioun · *humana natura;*
That Cryst be nouȝt biknowe here · for *consummatus deus,*

B. 7. Reste WCOY; Rested LR. 11. prikye WO; prekie B; pryke LC. 16. auntrous RO; aunterous C; Auentrous W; aunturos L. 18. bemente RO; bement L. 24. *consumatus* L.

Alle manere of men · mercy and for-ȝeuenesse,
And louye hem yliche hym-sylf · that hus lyf a-mende.
Ich may no lenger lette,' quath he · and lyarde he prykede,
And wente away as the wynde · and ther-with ich awakede.

Hic explicit passus tercius de Dobet.

PASSUS XXI.

Hic incipit passus quartus de Dobet.

WO-werie and wetschod · wente ich forth after,
As a recheles renke · that reccheth nat of sorwe,
And ȝeode forth lyke a lorell · al my lyf-tyme,
Til ich wax wery of this worlde · and wilnede efte to slepe,
And lenede me til lenten · and longe tyme ich slepte.
Of gurles and of *gloria laus* · gretliche me dremede,
And how *osanna* by orgone · olde folk songe.
On was semblable to the Samaritan · and somdel to Peers Plouhman,
Barfot on an asse bak · bootles cam prykye,
With-oute spores other spere · and sprakliche he lokede,
As is the kynde of a knyght · that cometh to be doubed,
To geten hus gilte spores · and galoches y-couped,
Then was Faith in a fenestre · and cryde, '*a! filij Dauid!*'
As doth an heraud of armes · when auntrous cometh to Iustes.
Olde Iewes of Ierusalem · for Ioye thei songen,
Benedictus qui venit in nomine domini.
Thenne ich fraynede at Faith · 'what al that fare by-mente,
And ho sholde Iusten in Ierusalem?' · 'Iesus,' he seide,
'And fecche that the feond cleymeth · Peers frut the Plouhman.'
'Ys Peers in this place?' quath ich · and he preynkte vpon me,
'*Liberum-dei-arbitrium*,' quath he · 'for loue hath vndertake
That this Iesus of hus gentrise · shal Iouste in Peers armes,
In hus helme and in hus haberion · *humana natura;*
That Crist be nat knowe · for *consummatus deus*,

C. 1. wetschode P. 2. richeles P. 4. to IMFTG; PE *om.* 7. orgone F; orgene IT; orgne PE. folk FTG; men PEM. 12. y-couped IMFT; y-coped PG. 14. auntres (*sic*) PEIMG; auntr*us* F; auntro*us* T. 16. fraynnede P. at IMFT; of G; PE *om.* 21. þis ME; þys G; þes P. genterise P. 22. in IMET; PFG *om.* 23. þa (*for* þat) P.

In Piers paltok the Plowman · this priker shal ryde;
For no dynte shal hym dere · as *in deitate patris.*'
'Who shal Iuste with Iesus?' quod I · 'Iuwes or scribes?'
'Nay,' quod he, 'the foule fende · and Fals-dome and Deth.
Deth seith he shal fordo · and adown brynge
Al that lyueth or loketh · in londe or in watere.
Lyf seyth that he likth · and leyth his lif to wedde,
That for al that Deth can do · with-in thre dayes,
To walke and fecche fro the fende · Piers fruite the Plowman,
And legge it there hym lyketh · and Lucifer bynde,
And forbete and adown brynge · bale and deth for euere:
O mors, ero mors tua!
Thanne cam *Pilatus* with moche peple · *sedens pro tribunali*,
To se how doughtilich Deth sholde do · and deme her botheres riȝte.
The Iuwes and the Iustice · aȝeine Iesu thei were,
And al her courte on hym cryde · *crucifige* sharpe.
Tho put hym forth a piloure · bifor Pilat, and seyde,
'This Iesus of owre Iewes temple · Iaped and dispised,
To fordone it on o day · and in thre dayes after
Edefye it eft newe · (here he stant that seyde it)
And ȝit maken it as moche · in al manere poyntes,
Bothe as longe and as large · bi loft and by grounde.'

'*Crucifige*,' quod a cacchepolle · 'I warante hym a wicche!'
'*Tolle, tolle!*' quod an other · and toke of kene thornes,
And bigan of kene thorne · a gerelande to make,
And sette it sore on his hed · and seyde in envye,
'*Aue, rabby!*' quod that ribaude · and threw redes at hym,
Nailled hym with thre nailles · naked on the rode,
And poysoun on a pole · thei put vp to his lippes,
And bede hym drynke his deth-yuel · his dayes were ydone.
'And ȝif that thow sotil be · help now thi-seluen,
If thow be Cryst, and kynges sone · come downe of the rode;

B. 35. and OY; LWCR *om.* 46. *Crufige* L. 47. o (*for* of) L.

In Peeres plates the Plouhman · this prykiere shal ryde;
For no dint shal hym dere · as *in deitate patris.*'
'Ho shal Iouste with Iesus,' quath ich · 'Iewes, other scrybes?'
'Nay,' quath Faith, 'bote the feond · and Fals-dom-to-deye.
Deth seith he wol for-do · and a-doun brynge
Al that lyueth other loketh · a londe and a watere.
Lyf seith that he lyeth · and hath leyde hus lyf to wedde,
That for al that Deth can do · with-inne thre dayes,
To walke and fecche fro the feonde · Peers frut the Plouhman,
And legge hit ther hym lyketh · and Lucifer bynde,
And forbete and bringe adoun · bale and deth for euere;
O mors, ero mors tua!'
Thenne cam *Pilatus* with muche peuple · *sedens pro tribunali,*
To seo hou douhtiliche Deth sholde do · and deme here beyer ryght.
The Iuwes and the Iustices · azens Iesus they were,
And alle the court cryede · '*crucifige*' lowde.
Thenne put hym forth a pelour · by-for Pilat, and seyde,
'Thys Iesus of oure Iuwen temple · Iapede and despisede,
To for-don hit on a day · and in thre dayes after
Edefien hit efte newe—· her he stant that seyde hit—
And ȝut make hit as muche · in alle manere poyntes,
Bothe as longe and as large · aloft and a-grounde,
And as wyde as hit euere was · this we witnessen alle.'
'*Crucifige,*' quath a kachepol · 'he can of wicche-crafte.'
'*Tolle, tolle,*' quath another · and toke of kene thornes,
And by-gan of a grene thorne · a garlaunde to make,
And sette hit sore on hus hefd · and suthe seyde in enuye,
'*Aue, rabbi,*' quath that ribaud · and reodes shotte at hus eyen:—
And nailede hym with thre nayles · naked on the rode,
And with a pole poyson · putten to hus lippes,
And beden hym drynke, hus deth to lette · and hus dayes lengthen;
And seide, 'yf he sothfast beo · he wol hym-self helpen;
And now, yf thow be Criste · godes sone of heuene,
Come a-doune of this rode · and thenne wol we leyue

C. 33. hit MG; it IFT; hym PE. 34. forbete MI; forbite PEFTG. and bringe adoun MFG; adoun and brynge PET. and (3) MF; PEITG *om.* *ero—tua* EF; *tua ero mors* P. 36. deyme P. 38. lowede P. 39. forth IMFTG; PE *om.* 43. hit MEG; it IFT; P *om.* 45. whitnessen P. 49. on EMIFTG; in P. 50. rabbi M; rabi PITG. and MEIFTG; a P. 53. beden IMT; bid PE. 54. sotthfast P.

Thanne shul we leue that Lyf the loueth · and wil nou3t lete
the deye!'
'*Consummatum est*,' quod Cryst · and comsed forto swowe
Pitousliche and pale · as a prisoun that deyeth;
The lorde of lyf and of li3te · tho leyed his eyen togideres.
The daye for drede with-drowe · and derke bicam the sonne,
The wal wagged and clef · and al the worlde quaued.
Ded men for that dyne · come out of depe graues,
And tolde whi that tempest · so longe tyme dured.
'For a bitter bataille' · the ded bodye sayde;
'Lyf and Deth in this derknesse · her one fordoth her other;
Shal no wi3te wite witterly · who shal haue the maystrye,
Er Sondey aboute sonne-rysynge' · and sank with that til erthe.
Some seyde that he was goddes sone · that so faire deyde,
Vere filius dei erat iste, etc.
And somme saide he was a wicche · 'good is that we assaye,
Where he be ded or nou3te ded · doun er he be taken.'
Two theues also · tholed deth that tyme,
Vppon a crosse bisydes Cryst · so was the comune lawe.
A cacchepole cam forth · and craked bothe her legges,
And her armes after · of eyther of tho theues.
Ac was no boy so bolde · goddes body to touche;
For he was kny3te and kynges sone · kynde for3af that tyme,
That non harlot were so hardy · to leyne hande vppon hym.
Ac there cam forth a kny3te · with a kene spere ygrounde,
Hi3te *Longeus*, as the lettre telleth · and longe had lore his si3te.
Bifor Pilat and other peple · in the place he houed;
Maugre his many tethe · he was made that tyme
To take the spere in his honde · and Iusten with Iesus;
For alle thei were vnhardy · that houed on hors or stode,
To touche hym or to taste hym · or take hym down of rode.
But this blynde bacheler thanne · bar hym thorugh the herte;
The blode spronge down by the spere · and vnspered the kni3tes
eyen.
Thanne fel the kny3te vpon knees · and cryed hym mercy—

That Lyf the louyeth · and wol nat lete the deye.'
'*Consummatum est*,' quath Crist · and comsede for to sounye
Pitousliche and paal · as prison that deyeth;
The lord of lyf and of light · tho leyde hus eyen togederes.
The day for drede ther-of with-drow · and deork by-cam the sonne;
The wal of the temple to-cleef · euene a two peces;
The hard roche al to-rof · and ryght derk nyght hit semede;
The erthe quook and quashte · as hit quyke were,
And dede men for that deon · comen oute of deope graues,
And tolden why that tempest · so longe tyme durede.
'For a byter bataile' · the dede bodye seyde,
'Lyf and Deth in this deorknesse · her on for-doth that other,
Ac shal no wi3t wite witerliche · ho shal haue the mastrye,
Er Soneday, a-boute sonne-rysynge' · and sank with that til erthe.
Somme seiden he was godes sone · that so faire deyede;
Vere filius dei erat iste:
Some seiden, 'he can of sorcerye · good is that we a-saye
Wher he be ded other nat ded · doun er he be take.'
Two theoues ther wer · that tholeden deth that tyme
Vpon crois by-side Crist · so was the comune lawe.
Quikliche cam a cacchepol · and craked a-two here legges,
And here armes after · of euerich of tho theoues.
Ac ther was no boye so bolde · godes body to touche,
For he was knyght and kynges sone · kynde for-3af that tyme
That no boye hadde hardinesse · hym to touche in deyinge.
Ac ther cam forth a blynde knyght · with a kene spere y-grounde,
Hihte *Longeus*, as the lettere telleth · and longe hadde lore hus sight.
By-fore Pilat and other peuple · in the place he houede.
Ac maugre hus meny teth · he was mad that tyme
To Iouste with Iesus · this blynde Iuwe *Longeus;*
For alle hij were vnhardy · that houede ther other stode,
To touche hym other to tryne hym · other to take hym doun and graue hym,
Bote this blynde bachelere · that bar hym thorw the herte;
The blood sprang doun by the sper · and vnsperrede the knyghtes eyen.
Tho fel the knyght vpon knees · and cryed Iesu mercy—

C. 62. pices P. 63. hit G; it IFT; PE *om.* 64. quashete P. 66. wy P. 69. wi3t IF; wy3t G; whit P. 81. a (2) IMT; PEFG *om.* 84. maugrey P. 90. fel MFTG; feol P.

'Aȝeyne my wille it was, lorde · to wownde ȝow so sore!' 88
He seighed and sayde · 'sore it me athynketh;
For the dede that I haue done · I do me in ȝowre grace;
Haue on me reuth, riȝtful Iesu!' · and right with that he wept.

Thanne gan Faith felly · the fals Iuwes dispise, 92
Called hem caytyues · acursed for euere,
For this foule vyleynye · 'veniaunce to ȝow alle!
To do the blynde bete hym ybounde · it was a boyes conseille.
Cursed caytyue! · kniȝthod was it neuere 96

To mysdo a ded body · by day or by nyȝte.
The gree ȝit hath he geten · for al his grete wounde.
For ȝowre champioun chiualer · chief knyȝt of ȝow alle,
ȝelt hym recreaunt rennyng · riȝt at Iesus wille. 100
For be this derkenesse ydo · his deth worth avenged,
And ȝe, lordeynes, han ylost · for Lyf shal haue the maistrye,
And ȝowre fraunchise, that fre was · fallen is in thraldome,
And ȝe, cherles, and ȝowre children · chieue shal ȝe neure, 104
Ne haue lordship in londe · ne no londe tylye,
But al bareyne be · and vsurye vsen,
Which is lyf that owre lorde · in alle lawes acurseth.
Now ȝowre good dayes ar done · as Danyel prophecyed, 108
Whan Cryst cam, of her kyngdom · the croune shulde cesse;
Cum veniat sanctus sanctorum, cessabit vnxio vestra.'
What for fere of this ferly · and of the fals Iuwes,
I drowe me in that derkenesse · to *decendit ad inferna.*
And there I sawe sothely · *secundum scripturas,* 112
Out of the west coste · a wenche, as me thouȝte,
Cam walkynge in the wey · to-helle-ward she loked.
Mercy hiȝt that mayde · a meke thynge with-alle,
A ful benygne buirde · and boxome of speche. 116
Her suster, as it semed · cam softly walkynge,
Euene out of the est · and westward she loked.
A ful comely creature · Treuth she hiȝte,

B. 109. of W; LRCOBY *om.* cesse WCY; cece O; L *om.*

'A-ȝens my wil hit was,' quath he · 'that ich ȝow wonde made!'
He syghede and seide · 'sore hit me for-thynketh,
Of the dede that ich haue don · ich do me in ȝoure grace.
My londe and my lycame · at ȝoure lykynge taketh hit,
And haue mercy on me, ryghtful Iesu!' · and ryght with that he wepte.
Thenne gan Faith foully · the false Iewes to despisen,
And calde hem 'caytifs a-corsed' · for this was a vil vilanye:—
'Veniaunce is to ȝou falle · that makede the blynde
Beten hym that was ded · hit was a boyes dede!'
Thus Faith bi-gon to fare · with the false Iewes—
'Corsede caityfs! · knyghthod was hit neuere
To bete a body ybounde · with eny bri3t wepne,
The gree ȝut hath he geten · for alle hus grete wondes.
For ȝoure champion chiualer · chief knyght of ȝow alle
ȝelt hym recreaunt rennynge · ryght at Iesus wil.
For beo this deorknesse ydo · Deth worth venkised,
And ȝe, lordlinges, han lost · for Lyf shal haue the maystrie,
And ȝoure fraunchise that freo was · fallen is to thraldom,
And alle ȝoure children cheorles · cheuen shulle thei neuere,
Ne haue lordshup in lond · nother lond tylie,
And as barayne beo · and by vsure libbe,
The whiche is lif that oure lorde · in alle lawes defendeth.
Now beoth ȝoure goode dayes don · as Daniel of ȝow telleth,
When Crist with crois ouercam · ȝoure kyngdom shal to-cleue;
Cum uenerit sanctus sanctorum, cessabit unctio uestra.'
What for fere of this ferly · and of the false Iewes,
Ich drow in that deorknesse · to *descendit ad inferna*,
And ther ich seyh sothliche · *secundum scripturas*,
Out of the west, as it were · a wenche, as me thouhte,
Cam walkynge in the way · to-helleward hue lokede.
Mercy hihte that mayde · a mylde thyng with-alle,
And a ful benygne burde · and buxum of speche.
Heore sustre, as hit semede · cam softly walkynge
Euene out of the est · and westwarde hue thouhte,
A comely creature and clene · Treuthe hue hihte.

C. 95. and IFT; PEMG *om.* 100. *From* M; PEIFGT *omit this line.* 102. bri3th P. 104. campion P. 108. fraunchises P. 109. þe (*for* thei) P. 118. weynche P. 119. he (*for* hue) P; heo T; sche IM. 121. benyngne P. 123. he (*for* hue) PFG; sche IMT. 124. heo (*for* hue) G; sheo P; sche IM; scheo F.

For the vertue that hir folwed · aferd was she neuere.
Whan this maydenes mette · Mercy and Treuth,
Eyther axed other · of this grete wonder,
Of the dyne and of the derknesse · and how the daye rowed,
And which a liȝte and a leme · lay befor helle.
'Ich haue ferly of this fare · in feith,' seyde Treuth,
'And am wendyng to wyte · what this wonder meneth.'
'Haue no merueille,' quod Mercy · 'myrthe it bytokneth.
A mayden that hatte Marye · and moder with-out felyng
Of any kynnes creature · conceyued thorw speche
And grace of the holygoste; · wex grete with childe;
With-outen wem · in-to this worlde she brouȝt hym;
And that my tale be trewe · I take god to witnesse.
Sith this barn was bore · ben thritti wynter passed;
Which deyde and deth tholed · this day aboute mydday.
And that is cause of this clips · that closeth now the sonne,
In menynge that man shal · fro merkenesse be drawe,
The while this liȝte and this leme · shal Lucyfer ablende.
For patriarkes and prophetes · han preched her-of often,
That man shal man saue · thorw a maydenes helpe,
And that was tynt thorw tre · tree shal it wynne,
And that deth doun brouȝte · deth shal releue.'
'That thow tellest,' quod Treuth · 'is but a tale of Waltrot!
For Adam and Eue · and Abraham with other,
Patriarkes and prophetes · that in peyne liggen,
Leue thow neuere that ȝone liȝte · hem alofte brynge,
Ne haue hem out of helle · holde thi tonge, Mercy!
It is but a trufle that thow tellest · I, Treuth, wote the sothe.
For that is ones in helle · out cometh it neuere;
Iob the prophete, patriarke · reproueth thi sawes,
Quia in inferno nulla est redempcio.'
Thanne Mercy ful myldly · mouthed thise wordes,
'Thorw experience,' quod she · 'I hope thei shal be saued.
For venym for-doth venym · and that I proue by resoun.
For of alle venymes · foulest is the scorpioun,
May no medcyne helpe · the place there he styngeth,

B. 146. helde (*for* holde) L.

For the vertue that here folwede · afered was hue neuere.
Whan theos maydenes metten · Mercy and Treuthe,
Ayther axed of other · of this grete wonder,
Of the deone and deorknesse · and how the day rowed,
And whiche a light and a leom · lay by-fore helle.
'Ich haue ferly of this fare · in faith,' seide Treuthe,
'And am wendyng to wyte · what this wonder meneth.'
'Haue no meruayle ther-of,' quath Mercy · 'murthe hit by-tokneth.
A mayde that hatte Marie · and moder with-oute felynge
Of eny kynde of creature · conceyuede thorw speche
And grace of the holygost · waxe gret with childe,
With-oute wommanes wem · in-to this worlde brouhte hym;
And that my tale is trewe · ich take god to witnesse.
Sutthen this barn was ybore · beoth thritty wynter passed,
Deyed and deth tholede · this day a-boute mydday;
That is the cause of this eclipse · that ouer-closeth now the sonne,
In menynge that man shal · fro meorknesse beo drawe,
The while this light and this leom · shal Lucifer a-blende.
For patriarkes and prophetes · han prechede her-of ofte,
That thyng that tynt was thorw treo · treo shal hit wynne,
And that that deth doun brouhte · deth shal releue.'
'That that thou tellest,' quath Treuthe · 'is bote a tale of Walterot!
For Adam and Eue · and Abraham with othere,
Patriarkes and prophetes · that in peyne liggen,
Leyf hit neuere that ȝon lyght · hem a-lofte brynge,
Ne haue hem out of helle; · hold thy tonge, Mercy,
Hit is trufle that thou tellest; · ich, Treuthe, wot the sothe,
That thyng that ones was in helle · out cometh hit neuere.
For Iob the parfit patriarke · repreoueth thy sawes,
Quia in inferno nulla est redempcio.'
Thenne Mercy ful myldeliche · mouthed thes wordes,
'Thorgh experience,' quath heo · 'ich hope thei shulle be sauede.
For venym for-doth venym · ther vecche ich euydence,
That Adam and Eue · haue shullen bote.
Of alle fretynge venymes · the vilest is the scorpion;
May no medecyne amende · the place ther he styngeth,

C. 125. he (*for* hue) PFT; sche IM; heo G. 128. roued PE; rouede IG; rowide T. 129. P *ins.* wich *before 2nd* a. 136. wommanes FT; womanes M; woman E; wommen P. wordle PG. 137. trywe P. 142. ableynde P. 149. ȝeon (*for* ȝon) P.

Tyl he be ded and do ther-to · the yuel he destroyeth,
The fyrst venymouste · thorw venym of hym-self.
So shal this deth for-do · I dar my lyf legge,
Al that Deth fordyd furste · thorw the deuelles entysynge;
And riȝt as thorw gyle · man was bigyled,
So shal grace that bigan · make a good sleighte;

Ars vt artem falleret.'

Now suffre we,' seyde Treuth · 'I se, as me thinketh,
Out of the nippe of the north · nouȝt ful fer hennes,
Riȝtwisnesse come rennynge · reste we the while;
For he wote more than we · he was er we bothe.'
'That is soth,' seyde Mercy · 'and I se here bi southe,
Where Pees cometh playinge · in pacience yclothed;
Loue hath coueyted hir longe · leue I none other
But he sent hir some lettre · what this liȝte bymeneth,
That ouer-houeth helle thus; · she vs shal telle.'

Whan Pees, in pacience yclothed · approched nere hem tweyne,
Riȝtwisnesse her reuerenced · for her riche clothyng,
And preyed Pees to telle hir · to what place she wolde,
And in her gay garnementz · whom she grete thouȝte?
'My wille is to wende,' quod she · 'and welcome hem alle,
That many day myȝte I nouȝte se · for merkenesse of synne.
Adam and Eue · and other moo in helle,
Moyses and many mo · mercy shal haue;
And I shal daunce ther-to · do thow so, sustre!
For Iesus Iusted wel · Ioye bygynneth dawe;

Ad vesperum demorabitur fletus, et ad matutinum leticia.

Loue, that is my lemman · suche lettres me sente,
That Mercy, my sustre, and I · mankynde shulde saue;
And that god hath forgyuen · and graunted me, Pees, and Mercy,
To be mannes meynpernoure · for euere-more after.

B. 158. fordide W; dyd LCROB; *cf.* l. 343.

Til he be ded, ydo ther-to · and thenne hit destroieth
The ferst venemoste · thorgh vertu of hym-selue.
And so shal this deth for-do · ich dar my lyf legge,
Al that 'Deth and the deuel · dude formest to Eue.
Ryght as the gylour thorw gyle · by-gylede man formest,
So shal grace that al by-gan · make a good ende,
And by-gyle the gylour · and that is a good sleithe;
Ars ut artem falleret.'
'Now suffre we,' seide Treuthe · 'ich seo, as me thynketh,
Out of the nype of the north · nat ful fer hennes,
Ryghtwisnesse come rennynge; · reste we the whyle;
For hue wot more than we · hue was er we bothe.'
'That is soth,' seide Mercy · 'and ich seo her by southe,
Wher cometh Pees pleyinge · in pacience yclothed;
Loue heore hath coueyted longe · leyue ich non other
Bote Loue haue sent heore som lettere · what this light bymeneth
That ouere-houeth helle thus; · hue shal ous telle.'
Whenne Pees, in pacience yclothed · aproched ayther other,
Ryghtwisnesse reuerencede Pees · in heore riche clothinge,
And prayede Pees to tellen huere · to what place hue wolde,
In heore gay garnemens · wham hue gladie thouhte?
'My wil is to wende,' quath Pees · 'and wel-come hem alle,
That meny day myghte ich nat seo · for meorknesse of synne.
Adam and Eue · and other mo in helle,
Moyses and meny mo · mercy shullen synge;
And ich shal daunce ther-to · do al-so thow, suster!
For Iesus Iousted wel · Ioye by-gynneth to dawen;
Ad uesperum demorabitur fletus, et ad matutinum leticia.
Loue that is my lemman · suche letteres me sente,
That Mercy my suster, and ich · mankynde shulde saue;
And that god hath for-gyue · and graunted to al mankynde,
Mercy, my suster, and me · to maynprise hem alle.
And Crist hath conuerted · the kynde of ryghtwisnesse
In-to pees and pyte · of hus pure grace.

C. 160. destroieþ MIF; distrieþ P. 162. dar EFIT; þar P. 168. feer (*for* fer) P. 169. Rythwisnesse PM. wyle P. 170. he PIFTG; *but read* hue. P. *ins.* þan *after* er. 172. ycloþed EMITG; cloþed PF. 175. he PIFTG; sche M; *read* hue. 176. ycloþed EMITG; cloþed PF. 178. heo F; sche MI; she T; he P; *read* hue. 179. heo FG; sche MI; she T; he P; *read* hue. 180. weynde P. 187. shulde M; scholde E; shullen PF; schal ITG.

Lo! here the patent!' quod Pees · '*in pace in idipsum*— 184
And that this dede shal dure—· *dormiam et requiescam.*'
'What, rauestow?' quod Riȝtwisnesse · 'or thow art riȝt dronke!

Leuestow that ȝonde liȝte · vnlouke myȝte helle,
And saue mannes soule? · sustre, wene it neure! 188
At the bygynnynge, god · gaf the dome hym-selue,
That Adam and Eue · and alle that hem suwed
Shulde deye doune riȝte · and dwelle in pyne after,
If that thei touched a tre · and the fruite eten. 192
Adam afterward · aȝeines his defence,
Frette of that fruit · and forsoke, as it were,
The loue of owre lorde · and his lore bothe,
And folwed that the fende tauȝte · and his felawes wille, 196
Aȝeines resoun, I, Riȝtwisnesse · recorde thus with treuth,
That her peyne be perpetuel · and no preyere hem helpe.
For-thi late hem chewe as thei chose · and chyde we nouȝt, sustres,
For it is botelees bale · the bite that thei eten.' 200
'And I shal preue,' quod Pees · 'her peyne mote haue ende,
And wo in-to wel · mowe wende atte laste;
For had thei wist of no wo · wel had thei nouȝte knowen.
For no wiȝte wote what wel is · that neuere wo suffred, 204
Ne what is hote hunger · that had neuere defaute.

If no nyȝte ne were · no man, as I leue,
Shulde wite witterly · what day is to mene;

Shulde neuere riȝte riche man · that lyueth in reste and ese 208
Wyte what wo is · ne were the deth of kynde.
So god that bygan al · of his good wille
Bycam man of a mayde · mankynde to saue,
And suffred to be solde · to see the sorwe of deyinge, 212

B. 201. I WCOB; LR *om.*

Lo, here the patente!' quath Pees · '*in pace in idipsum*— 192
And that this dede shal dure—· *dormiam et requiescam.*'
'Rauest thou?' quath Ryghtwisnesse · 'other thou art ryght dronke!
Leyuest thou that ȝon light · vnlouke myghte helle,
And saue mannes soule? · suster, wene hit neuere! 196
At the begynnynge of the worlde · god gaf the dom hymselue,
That Adam and Eue · and hus issue alle
Sholden deye doun-ryht · and dwelle in peyne euere,
Yf thei touchede the treo · and of the frut eten. 200
Adam afterwarde · a-ȝens hus defense,
Faste fret of that frut · and for-soke, as hit were,
The leel loue of oure lorde · and hus lore bothe,
And folwede that the feonde tauhte · and hus fleshes wil, 204
Aȝens reson and ryghtwysnesse; · recorde this with treuthe,
That here peyne is perpetuel · no preyere may hem helpe.
For-thi let hem chewe as thei chose · and chide we nat, susteres,
For hit is a botles bale · the byte that thei eten.' 208
'And ich shal preye,' quath Pees · 'here peyne mote haue ende,
That here wo in-to wele · wende mote atte laste;
For hadde thei wist of no wo · wele hadde thei nat knowe;
For wot no wight what wele is · that neuere wo suffrede, 212
Ne what is hot hunger · that hadde neuere defaute.
Ho couthe kyndeliche · with colour discriue,
Yf alie the worlde were whit · other swan-whit alle thynges?
Yf no nyght ne were · no man, as ich leyue, 216
Sholde wite witerly · what day were to mene.
Ne hadde god suffred of som · other than hym-selue,
He hadde nat wist wyterly · whether deth wer soure other sweyte.
For sholde neuere right riche man · that lyueth in reste and hele
Ywyte what wo is · ne were the deth of kynde. 221
So god that al by-gan · of hus good wil
By-cam man of a mayde · mankynde to saue,
And suffrede to be solde · to seo the sorwe of deyynge, 224

C. 193. *dormiam, &c.* is from EIMFTG; P *om.* 194. art IMFT; ert PEG. 204. sheshes (*for* fleshes) P. 209. P *ins.* an *before* ende. 210. atte þe (*for* atte, *wrongly*) P. 212. wight IFT; whit P. 214. wiþ T (*which seems the right reading*); wit P; *with, alt. to* whit E; white IF; whyȝt G; whijt M. 215. Hif (*for* Yf) P. 216. ne ITG; PEMF *om.* 217. whiterly P. 218. suffrede P. 219. weþer P.

The which vnknitteth al kare · and comsynge is of reste.
For til *modicum* mete with vs · I may it wel avowe,
Wote no wi3te, as I wene · what is ynough to mene.
For-thi god of his goodnesse · the fyrste gome Adam,
Sette hym in solace · and in souereigne myrthe;
And sith he suffred hym synne · sorwe to fele,
To wite what wel was · kyndelich to knowe it.
And after god auntred hym-self · and toke Adames kynde,
To wyte what he hath suffred · in thre sondri places,
Bothe in heuene, and in erthe · and now til helle he thynketh,
To wite what aɬ wo is · that wote of al Ioye.

So it shal fare bi this folke; · her foly and her synne
Shall lere hem what langour is · and lisse with-outen ende.
Wote no wighte what werre is · there that pees regneth,
Ne what is witterly wel · til weyllowey hym teche.'
Thanne was there a wi3te · with two brode eyen,
Boke hi3te that beupere · a bolde man of speche.
'By godes body,' quod this Boke · 'I wil bere witnesse,
That tho this barne was ybore · there blased a sterre,
That alle the wyse of this worlde · in o witte acordeden,
That such a barne was borne · in Bethleem citee,
That mannes soule sholde saue · and synne destroye.
And alle the elementz,' quod the Boke · 'her-of bereth witnesse.
That he was god that al wrou3te · the walkene firste shewed;
Tho that weren in heuene · token *stella comata*,
And tendeden hir as a torche · to reuerence his birthe;
The ly3te folwed the lorde · in-to the lowe erthe.
The water witnessed that he was god · for he went on it;
Peter the apostel · parceyued his gate,
And as he went on the water · wel hym knewe, and seyde,
Iube me venire ad te super aquas.

B. 240. þe WRO; þat LCB.

The whiche vnknytteth alle care · and comsyng is of reste.
For til moreyne mete with ous · ich may hit wel a-vowe,
Ne wot no wight, as ich wene · what is ynowh to mene.
For-thi god of hus goodnesse · the furst man Adam,
He sette hym in solace furst · and in souerayne murthe;
And sutthe suffrede hym to synege · sorwe to fele,
To wite ther-thorw what wele was · and kyndeliche to knowe.
And after auntrede god hym-self · and tok Adams kynde,
To wite what he hadde suffred · in thre sondry places,
Bothe in heuene and in erthe; · and now to helle he thenketh,
To wite what alle wo is · that wot of alle ioye;
Omnia probate; quod bonum est tenete.
So shal hit fare by this folke · here folie and here synne
Shal lere hem what loue is · and lisse with-outen ende.
For wot no wight what werre is · ther as pees regneth,
Ne what is witerliche wele · til wele-a-way hym teche.'
Thenne was ther a wight · with two brode eyen,
Book hihte that beau-pere · a bold man of speche.
'By godes body,' quath this Book · 'ich wole bere wyttnesse,
Tho this barn was ybore · ther blased a sterre,
That alle the wise of the worlde · in o wit a-cordede,
That suche a barn was ybore · in Bethleem the cyte,
That mannes soule sholde saue · and synne destruye.
And alle the elemens,' quath the Book · 'here-of bereth witnesse.
That he was god that al wrouhte · the wolkene furst shewede;
Tho that weren in heuene · token *stella comata*,
And tenden hit as a torche · to reuerence hus burthe;
That light folwede the lorde · in-to the lowe erthe.
The water witnessede that he was god · for he wente on hym drye;
Peter the apostel · parceyuede hus gate,
And as he wente vpon the water · wel hym knewe, and seide,
Lord Crist, comaunde me · to come to the on watur;
'*Domine, iube me uenire ad te super aquas.*'

C. 225. vnknettiþ T; vnknyȝteth (*sic*) I; vnknette M; vnknyt EF; vnknytte P; vn-knitte G; (*perhaps* vnknyt *is best, but this is the contracted form of* vnknytteþ, *so that it is much the same*). 227. whight P. 228. goudnesse P. 231. white P. wat P. 232. tok MTG; touk P. 233. þre IFTG; þe PE. 239. is IMFTG; PE *om.* whiterliche P. 240. whight P. 242. þis EMFTG; þes P. 244. acordede FG; acorde P. 247. whitnesse P. 249. þo EIMTG; To P. 252. whitnessed P. (*2na*) he IMFT; god PEG. 255. *This line is in* F *only.* *super aquas* EMF; PIT *om.*

And lo! how the sonne gan louke · her liȝte in her-self,
Whan she seye hym suffre · that sonne and se made!
The erthe for heuynesse · that he wolde suffre,
Quaked as quykke thinge · and al biquashte the roche!
Lo! helle miȝte nouȝte holde · but opened thø god tholed,
And lete oute Symondes sones · to seen hym hange on rode.

And now shal Lucifer leue it · thowgh hym loth thinke;
For *Gygas* the geaunt · with a gynne engyned
To breke and to bete doune · that ben aȝeines Iesus.

And I, Boke, wil be brent · but Iesus rise to lyue,
In alle myȝtes of man · and his moder gladye,
And conforte al his kynne · and out of care brynge,
And al the Iuwen Ioye · vnioignen and vnlouken;
And but thei reuerencen his rode · and his resurexioun,
And bileue on a newe lawe · be lost lyf and soule.'
'Suffre we,' seide Treuth · 'I here and se bothe,
How a spirit speketh to helle · and bit vnspere the ȝatis;
Attollite portas, etc.'
A voice loude in that liȝte · to Lucifer cryeth,
'Prynces of this place · vnpynneth and vnlouketh!
For here cometh with croune · that kynge is of glorie.'
Thanne syked Sathan · and seyde to hem alle,
'Suche a lyȝte, aȝeines owre leue · Lazar it fette;
Care and combraunce · is comen to vs alle.
If this kynge come in · mankynde wil he fecche,
And lede it ther hym lyketh · and lyȝtlych me bynde.
Patriarkes and prophetes · han parled her-of longe,
That such a lorde and a lyȝte · shulde lede hem alle hennes.'

B. 246. biquasht L.

Loo, how the sonne gan louke · hure light in huere-selue,
When hue sey hym suffry deth · that sonne and seo made!
Lo, the erthe for heuynesse · that he wolde deth suffre,
Quakede as quike thyng · and al to-quashte the roches!
Lo, helle myghte nat holde · bote openede, tho god deth tholede,
And let out Symondes sones · to se hym honge on rode,
Non uisurum se mortem.
Now shal Lucifer leyue hit · thauh hym loth thynke;
For Iesus as a gyaunt · with a gyn cometh ȝonde,
To breken and to bete a-doun · alle that ben a-gayns hym,
And to haue out alle · of hem that hym liketh.
And ȝut ich, Book, wol beo brent · bote he arise to lyue,
And conforten al hus kyn · and out of care brynge,
And al the Iuwene Ioye · vnioynen, and vnlouken,
And bote thei reuerencen hus resurexion · and the rode honoure,
And by-leyue on a newe lawe · beo ylost lyf and soule!'
'Suffre we,' saide Treuthe · 'ich huyre and seo bothe
A spirit speke to helle · and bit vnsperre the ȝates;
Attollite portas, principes, vestras; et eleuamini, porte eternales, etc.'
A voys loude in that light · to Lucifer seide,
'Princes of this palys · prest vndo the ȝates,
For here cometh with coroune · the kynge of alle glorie.'
Thenne syhede Satan · and seide to helle,
'Suche a light a-ȝeyns our leue · Lazar hit fette;
Colde care and combraunce · is come to ous alle.
Yf this kyng come yn · mankynde wol he fecche,
And leden hit ther Lazar is · and lightliche me bynde.
Patriarkes and prophetes · han parled her-of longe,
That suche a lorde and a lyght · shal leden hem alle hennes.
Ac rys vp Ragamoffyn · and reche me alle the barres
That Belial thy bel-syre · beot with thy damme,
And ich shal lette this lorde · and hus light stoppe;
Ar we thorw bryghtnesse be blent · barre we the ȝates.

C. 257. he PEIFTG; heo M; *read* hue. 259. Quakede MEIFTG; Quaquide P. to-quashete P. 262. lyue (*for* leyue) P. 263. ȝonde MF; ȝont T; ȝeonde P. 268. vnioyenen P. 269. PG *ins.* yf *after* bote. 271. i MFT; we G; and PE; *read* ich. 279. þes (*for* þis) PG. come ITG; comeþ M; comen (*wrongly*) PF. 284. þy EIMFTG; þe P. bel IMG; beel PF.

'Lysteneth,' quod Lucifer · 'for I this lorde knowe,
Bothe this lorde and this liȝte; · is longe ago I knewe hym.
May no deth hym dere · ne no deueles queyntise,
And where he wil, is his waye; · ac war hym of the periles;
If he reue me my riȝte · he robbeth me by maistrye.
For by riȝt and bi resoun · tho renkes that ben here
Bodye and soule ben myne · bothe gode and ille.
For hym-self seyde · that sire is of heuene,
ȝif Adam ete the apple · alle shuldè deye,
And dwelle with vs deueles · this thretynge he made;

And he that sothenesse is · seyde thise wordes;

And sitthen I seised ·.seuene hundreth wyntre,
I leue that lawe nil nauȝte · lete hym the leest.'

'That is sothe,' seyde Sathan · 'but I me sore drede,
For thow gete hem with gyle · and his gardyne breke,

And in semblaunce of a serpent · sat on the appeltre,
And eggedest hem to ete · Eue by hir-selue,

Cheke we and cheyne we · and eche chyne stoppe,
That no light leope yn · at louer ne at loupe.
And thow, Astrot, hot out · and haue oute oure knaues,
Coltyng and al hus kynne · oure catel to saue.
Brynston boilaunt · brennyng out-casteth hit
Al hot on here heuedes · that entren ny the walles.
Setteth bowes of brake · and brasene gonnes,
And sheteth out shot ynowh · hus shultrom to blende.
Sette Mahon at the mangonel · and mulle-stones throweth,
With crokes and with kalketrappes · a-cloye we hem echone!'
'Lusteneth,' quath Lucifer · 'for ich this lord knowe,
Bothe this lord and this lyght · is longe gon ich knew hym.
May no deth this lord dere · ne no deoueles queyntise,
And wher he wole, is hus wey; · ac war hym of the periles;
Yf he reue me of my ryght · he robbeth me by mastrie.
For by ryght and reson · the renkes that beon here
Body and soule beth myne · bothe good and ille.
For he hym-self hit seide · that syre is of helle,
That Adam and Eue · and al hus issue
Sholden deye with deol · and here dwelle euere,
Yf that thei touchede a treo · other toke ther-of an appel.
Thus this lorde of light · suche a lawe made,
And sitthe he is so leel a lorde · ich leyue that he wol nat
Reuen ous of oure ryght · sutthe reson hem dampned,
And sutthe we han beo sesed · seuene thowsend wynter,
And neuere was ther-aȝeyn · and now wolde by-gynne,
He were vnwrast of hus worde · that witnesse is of trewthe.'
'That is soth,' seide Satan · 'bote ich me sore doute,
For thow gete hem with gyle · and hus gardyn breke,
A-geyn hus loue and hus leue · on hus londe ȝeodest,
Nat in forme of a feonde · bote in forme of an addre,
And entisedest Eue · to ete by heore on,
Ve soli!
And by-hihtest heore and hym · after to knowe,
As two godes, with god · bothe good and ille;
Thus with treison and with trecherie · thow troiledest hem bothe,

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C. 288. leopen P. 289. oure IFTG; PE *om.* 292. on MFTG; in PE. 293. and EIMFTG; a P. 297. Lusteneþ M; Lustneþ G; Lusteth PE. 307. þat IMET; PFG *om.* 308. thees (*for* this) P. 313. treweþe P. 320. two ET; to PMFIG.

And toldest hir a tale · of tresoun were the wordes;
And so thow haddest hem oute · and hider atte laste.
It is nou3te graythely geten · there gyle is the rote.'
'For god wil nou3t be bigiled' · quod Gobelyn, 'ne bi-iaped;
We haue no trewe title to hem · for thorwgh tresoun were thei dampned.'
'Certes, I drede me,' quod the deuel · 'leste treuth wil hem fecche.

This thretty wynter, as I wene · hath he gone and preched;
I haue assailled hym with synne · and some tyme yasked
Where he were god or goddes sone? · he gaf me shorte answere.
And thus hath he trolled forth · this two and thretty wynter,

And whan I seighe it was so · slepyng, I went
To warne Pilates wyf · what dones man was Iesus;
For Iuwes hateden hym · and han done hym to deth.
I wolde haue lengthed his lyf · for I leued, 3if he deyede,
That his soule wolde suffre · no synne in his sy3te.
For the body, whil it on bones 3ede · aboute was euere
To saue men fram synne · 3if hem-self wolde.

And now I se where a soule · cometh hiderward seyllynge
With glorie and with grete li3te · god it is, I wote wel.
I rede we flee,' quod he · 'faste alle hennes;
For vs were better nou3te be · than biden his sy3te.
For thi lesynges, Lucifer · loste is al owre praye.
Firste thorw the we fellen · fro heuene so heighe;
For we leued thi lesynges · we loupen oute alle with the,
And now for thi last lesynge · ylore we haue Adam,
And al owre lordeship, I leue · a londe and a water;
Nunc princeps huius mundi eicietur foras.'

B. 310, 311. we loupen—lesynge *is in* R *only*.

And dudest hem breke here buxomnesse · thorw false by-heste;
Thus haddest thou hem oute · and hyder atte laste.
Hit is nat greythly getyn · ther gyle is the rote.'
'And god wol nat be by-gyled' · quath Gobelyn, 'ne by-Iaped;
We haue no trewe title to hem · for thi treison hit maketh.'
'For-thi ich drede me,' quath the deouel · 'lest treuthe wol hem fecche.
And as thow by-gyledest godes ymage · in goynge of an addre,
So hath god by-gyled ous alle · in goynge of a wye.'
'For god hath go,' quath Gobelyn · 'in a gome lyknesse
This thritty wynter, as ich wene · and went a-bowte and prechede.
Ich haue asailid hym with synne · and som tyme ich askede
Wher he were god other godes sone? · he gaf me short answere.
Thus hath he troiled · and trauailed in hus tyme
Forth like a tydy man · this two and thritty wyntere,
And whenne ich seih that hit was so · ich sotelide how ich myghte
Lette hem that louede hym nat · lest thei wolde hym martrye.
Ich wolde haue lengthed hus lyf · for ich leyuede, yf he deyede,
And hus soule huder come · he sholde shende ous alle.
The body, whyle hit on bones ȝede · a-boute was hit euere
To lere men to beo leel · eche man to louen other;
The whiche lif and lawe · be hit longe y-used,
Hit shal vndon ous deoueles · and doun brynge ous alle.'
'Now y seo wher hus soule · cometh seilinge hiderwardes
With glorie and with gret light · god hit is, ich wot wel.
Ich rede we fleo,' quath the feond · 'faste alle hennes;
For us were betere nat beo · than abyde in hus syghte.
For thi lesynges, Lucifer · we loste furst our Ioye,
And out of heuene hider · thi prude made ous falle;
For we leyuede on thy lesinges · ther losten we oure blysse.
And now, for a later lesynge · that thow lowe tyl Eue,
We han lost oure lordshep · a londe and in helle;
Nunc princeps huius mundi eicietur foras.'

C. 322. he (*for* here) P. 326. triwe P. 335. two EFT; to PMG. 336. hit MEG; it IFT; he P. 340. wyle P. ȝeden P. 342. yusede P. 343. don (*for* doun) P. 346. wey (*for* we) P. 347. hus (*for* us) P. 348. lesynges IMFT; lesynge PEG; *see* l. 350. 350. lyuede P; *see* l. 338. oure FTG; PE *om.*; *see* l. 348. 352. Whe (*for* We) P. lorshep P. *eicietur foras* in M only.

Efte the liȝte bad vnlouke · and Lucifer answered,
'What lorde artow?' quod Lucifer · '*quis est iste?*'
'*Rex glorie*' · the liȝte sone seide,
'And lorde of myȝte and of mayne · and al manere vertues;
dominus virtutum;
Dukes of this dym place · anon vndo this ȝates,
That Cryst may come in · the kynges sone of heuene.'
And with that breth helle brake · with Beliales barres;
For any wye or warde · wide opene the ȝatis.
Patriarkes and prophetes · *populus in tenebris*,
Songen seynt Iohanes songe · '*ecce agnus dei.*'
Lucyfer loke ne myȝte · so lyȝte hym ableynte;
And tho that owre lorde loued · in-to his liȝte he lauȝte,
And seyde to Sathan, 'lo! here · my soule to amendes
For alle synneful soules · to saue tho that ben worthy.
Myne thei be and of me · I may the bette hem clayme.
Al-though resoun recorde · and riȝt of my-self,
That if thei ete the apple · alle shulde deye,
I bihyȝte hem nouȝt here · helle for euere.
For the dede that thei dede · thi deceyte it made;
With gyle thow hem gete · agayne al resoun.
For in my paleys, paradys · in persone of an addre,
Falseliche thow fettest there · thynge that I loued.
Thus ylyke a lusarde · with a lady visage,
Theuelich thow me robbedest; · the olde lawe graunteth,
That gylours be bigiled · and that is gode resoun;

B. 324. lorde RWCOBY; L *om.*

Suththe that Satan · myssayde thus foule
Lucifer for hus lesynges · leyue ich non other,
Bote oure lord atte laste · lyeres here rebuke,
And wyte hem al the wrecchednesse · that wrouht is on erthe.
Beo yware, ȝe wise clerkes · and wytty men of lawe,
That ȝe be-leiȝe nat these lewed men · for atte laste Dauid
Witnesseth in hus wrytynge · what is lyeres mede;

Odisti omnes qui operantur iniquitatem, et perdes omnes qui loquuntur mendacium.

A lytel ich ouer-lep · for lesynges sake,
That ich ne segge as ich seih · suynge my teme!—
For eft that light bad vnlouke · and Lucifer answerede,
'What lord art thu?' quath Lucifer; · a voys a-loud seyde,
'The lord of myght and of mayn · that made alle thynges.
Duke of this dymme place · a-non vndo the ȝates,
That Crist mowe comen in · the kynges sone of heuene.'
And with that breth helle brake · with alle Beliales barres;
For eny wye other warde · wyde openede the gates.
Patriarkes and prophetes · *populus in tenebris*,
Songen with seint Iohan · '*ecce agnus dei!*'
Lucifer loke ne myghte · so lyght him a-blente;
And tho that oure lord louede · with that lyght forth flowen.
'Lo, me her,' quath oure lorde · 'lyf and soule bothe,
For alle synful soules · to saue oure beyere ryght.
Myne thei were and of me · ich may the beter hem cleyme.
Al-thauh reson recorde · and ryght of my-selue,
That yf thei eten the appel · alle sholden deye,
Ich by-hihte hem nat here · helle for euere.
For the dedliche synne that thei duden · thi deceite hit made;
With gyle thow hem gete · ageyn alle reson.
For in my paleis paradis · in persone of an addere,
Falsliche thou fettest there · that me by-fel to loke,
By-glosedest hem and bygyledest hem · and my gardyn breke,
A-ȝeyns my loue and my leyue; · the olde lawe techeth,
That gylours be by-gylid · and in here gyle falle.

C. 356. wyten P. 358. be-leiȝe T; by-gylie PE; bi-gile MG. þeos P. P *om.* lewed. 359. Whitnesseþ P. 363. art IMFT; ert PEG. 364. mayn MFTG; mayne IE; man P. 375. þei (*for* þe) P. 382. þou FG; PEMIT *om.* 383. bygyledest G; bigilidest MIFT; gyledest PE. 385. be EFTG; ben M; beþ P.

Dentem pro dente, et oculum pro oculo.
Ergo, soule shal soule quyte · and synne to synne wende,
And al that man hath mysdo · I, man, wyl amende.
Membre for membre · bi the olde lawe was amendes,
And lyf for lyf also · and by that lawe I clayme it,
Adam and al his issue · at my wille her-after.
And that deth in hem fordid · my deth shal releue,
And bothe quykke and quyte · that queynte was thorw synne;
And that grace gyle destruye · good feith it asketh.
So leue it nou3te, Lucifer · a3eine the lawe I fecche hem,
But bi ri3t and by resoun · raunceoun here my lyges:
Non veni soluere legem, sed adimplere.
Thow fettest myne in my place · a3eines al resoun,
Falseliche and felounelich; · gode faith me it tau3te,
To recoure hem thorw raunceoun · and bi no resoun elles,
So that with gyle thow gete · thorw grace it is ywone.
Thow, Lucyfer, in lyknesse · of a luther addere,
Getest by gyle · tho that god loued;
And I, in lyknesse of a leode · that lorde am of heuene,
Graciousliche thi gyle haue quytte · go gyle a3eine gyle!
And as Adam and alle · thorw a tre deyden,
Adam and alle thorwe a tree · shal torne a3eine to lyue;
And gyle is bigyled · and in his gyle fallen:
Et cecidit in foueam quam fecit.
Now bygynneth thi gyle · ageyne the to tourne,
And my grace to growe · ay gretter and wyder.
The bitternesse that thow hast browe · brouke it thi-seluen,
That art doctour of deth · drynke that thow madest!
For I, that am lorde of lyf · loue is my drynke,
And for that drynke to-day · I deyde vpon erthe.
I fau3te so, me threstes 3et · for mannes soule sake;
May no drynke me moiste · ne my thruste slake,
Tyl the vendage falle · in the vale of Iosephath,
That I drynke ri3te ripe must · *resureccio mortuorum*,
And thanne shal I come as a kynge · crouned with angeles,
And han out of helle · alle mennes soules.
Fendes and fendekynes · bifor me shulle stande,

And ho so hitteth out a mannes eye · other elles hus for-teth,
Othere eny manere membre · maymeth other hurteth,
The same sore shal he haue · that enye so smyteth;
Dentem pro dente, et oculum pro oculo.
So lyf shal lyf lete · ther lyf hath lyf anyented,
So that lyf quyte lyf · the olde lawe hit asketh.
Ergo, soule shal soule quyte · and synne to synne wende,
And al that man mys-dude · ich, man, to amenden hit;
And that that deth for-dude · my deth to releuen,
Bothe aquyte and aquykye · that was aqueynt thorw synne;
And gyle be by-gyled · thorgh grace atte laste,
Ars ut artem falleret, etc.
So leyf hit nat, Lucifer · that ich a-ȝeyns the lawe
Fecche here eny synful soule · souereynliche by maistrie;
Bot thorgh ryght and reson · raunson here myne lige;
Non ueni soluere legem, sed adimplere.
So that thorgh gyle was geten · thorwe grace is now y-wonne.
And as Adam and alle · thorw a treo deyden,
Adam and alle thorgh a treo · shal turne to lyue.
And now by-gynneth thi gyle · a-gayn on the turne,
And my grace to growe · ay wydder and wydder.
The biternesse that thow hast browe · now brouk hit thyself;
That art doctour of deth · drynk that thow madest!
For ich that am lord of lyf · loue is my drynke,
And for that drynke to-daye · deyede, as hit semede;
Ac ich wol drynke of no dich · ne of no deop cleregie,
Bote of comune coppes · alle Cristene soules;
Ac thi drynke worth deth · and deop helle thy bolle.
Ich fauht so, me fursteth ȝut · for mannes soule sake;
Sicio.
May no pyement ne pomade · ne presiouse drynkes
Moyste me to the fulle · ne my thurst slake,
Til the vendage valle · in the vale of Iosaphat,
And drynke ryght rype most · *resurreccio mortuorum.*
Then shal ich come as a kyng · with coroune and with angeles,
And haue out of helle · alle menne soules.
Feondes and feondekenes · by-for me shullen stande,

C. 388. sore EIF; sor MT; for P. 389. P *om. 2nd* lyf. 393. my ITG; ich PE. 405. art IMFT; ert PEG. 414. valle P; falle EIMFTG.

And be at my biddynge · where so eure me lyketh.
And to be merciable to man · thanne my kynde it asketh;
For we beth bretheren of blode · but nou3te in baptesme alle.
Ac alle that beth myne hole bretheren · in blode and in baptesme,
Shal nou3te be dampned to the deth · that is with-outen ende;
Tibi soli peccaui, etc.
It is nou3t vsed in erthe · to hangen a feloun
Ofter than ones · though he were a tretour.
And 3if the kynge of that kyngedome · come in that tyme,
There the feloun thole sholde · deth or otherwyse,
Lawe wolde, he 3eue hym lyf · if he loked on hym.
And I, that am kynge of kynges · shal come suche a tyme,
There dome to the deth · dampneth al wikked;
And 3if lawe wil I loke on hem · it lithe in my grace,
Whether thei deye or deye nou3te · for that thei deden ille.
Be it any thinge abou3t · the boldenesse of her synnes,
I may do mercy thorw ri3twisnesse · and alle my wordes trewe.
And though holiwrit wil that I be wroke · of hem that deden ille,
Nullum malum inpunitum, etc.,

Thei shul be clensed clereliche · and wasshen of her synnes
In my prisoun purgatorie · til *parce* it hote,
And my mercy shal be shewed · to manye of my bretheren.
For blode may suffre blode · bothe hungry and akale,
Ac blode may nou3t se blode · blede, but hym rewe.'—
Audiui archana verba, que non licet homini loqui.—
'Ac my ri3twisnesse and ri3t · shal reulen al helle,
And mercy al mankynde · bifor me in heuene.
For I were an vnkynde kynge · but I my kynde holpe,
And namelich at such a nede · ther nedes helpe bihoueth;
Non intres in iudicium cum seruo tuo, domine.
Thus bi lawe,' quod owre lorde · 'lede I wil fro hennes
Tho that me loued · and leued in my comynge.
And for thi lesynge, Lucifer · that thow lowe til Eue,

B. 386. abou3te L. 397. *domine* is in O only.

And be at my byddyng · at blysse other at peyne.
Ac to beo merciable to man · thenne my kynde asketh;
For we beoth bretheren of blod · ac nat in baptisme alle.
Ac alle that beoth myn half-bretheren · in blod and in baptisme
Shal neuere eft in helle come · beo he ones oute;
Tibi soli peccaui, et malum contra te feci, etc.
Hit is nat vsed on erthe · to honge eny felones
Ofter than ones · thauh thei weren treitours.
And yf the kyng of the kyngdom · come in the tyme
Ther a theof tholy sholde · deth other Iuwise,
Lawe wolde he ȝeue hym lyf · and he lokede on hym.
And ich, that am kynge ouer kynges · shal come suche a tyme,
Ther that dom to the deoth · dampneth alle wyckede;
And yf lawe wol ich loke on hem · hit lyth in my grace,
Whether thei deye other deye nat · dude thei neuere so ille.
Be hit eny thyng dere aboutȝt · the boldness of here synne,
Ich may do mercy of my ryghtwisnesse · and alle myne wordes trewe.
For holy writ wole that ich be awreke · of hem that wrouhte ille;
As, *nullum malum impunitum, et nullum bonum irremuneratum.*
And so of alle wyckede · ich wolle here take veniaunce,
And ȝut my kynde, in my kene yre · shal contrarie my wil—
Domine, ne in furore tuo arguas me, neque in ira tua corripias me—
To beo merciable to menye · of my half-bretheren.
For blod may seo blood · bothe a-thurst and a-cale,
Ac blod may nat seo blod · blede, bote hym rewe.'—
Audiui archana verba, que non licet homini loqui.—
'Ac my ryghtwisnesse and my right · shal regnen in helle,
And mercy and mankynde · by-for me in heuene.
For ich were an vnkynde kynge · bote ich my kyn holpe,
And nameliche at suche a neode · that neodes help asketh;
Non intres in iudicium cum servo tuo, domine.
Thus by lawe,' quath oure lord · 'lede ich wol fro hennes
Alle that ich louye · and leyuede in my comynge.
Ac for the lesynge that thow, Lucifer · lowe til Eue,

C. 421. broþerne P (*and in* l. 422). 427. Iuwise EM; iewise IG; Iuwes P. 429. a kynge P; EIMFTG *omit* a. PE *om.* a. 430. dampned P. 433. dere aboutȝt MFE; dure y-bouht P. 434. trywe P. 438. broþerne P. 443. holpe EIMFT; helpe P.

Thow shalt abye it bittre'— · and bonde hym with cheynes.

Astaroth and al the route · hidden hem in hernes,
They dorste nouȝte loke on owre lorde · the boldest of hem alle,
But leten hym lede forth what hym lyked · and lete what hym liste.
Many hundreth of angeles · harpeden and songen,
Culpat caro, purgat caro; regnat deus dei caro.
Thanne piped pees · of poysye a note,
'*Clarior est solito post maxima nebula phebus,*
Post inimicitias clarior est et amor.
After sharpe shoures,' quod Pees · 'moste shene is the sonne;
Is no weder warmer · than after watery cloudes.
Ne no loue leuere · ne leuer frendes,
Than after werre and wo · whan Loue and Pees be maistres.

Was neuere werre in this worlde · ne wykkednesse so kene,
That ne Loue, and hym luste · to laughynge ne brouȝte,
And Pees thorw pacience · alle perilles stopped.'
'Trewes,' quod Treuth · 'thow tellest vs soth, bi Iesus!
Clippe we in couenaunt · and vch of vs cusse other!'
'And lete no peple,' quod Pees · 'perceyue that we chydde!
For inpossible is no thyng · to hym that is almyȝty.'
'Thow seist soth,' seyde Ryȝtwisnesse · and reuerentlich hir kyste,
Pees, and Pees here · *per secula seculorum.*
Misericordia et veritas obuiauerunt sibi; iusticia et pax osculate sunt.
Treuth tromped tho, and songe · '*Te deum laudamus*';
And thanne luted Loue · in a loude note,
Ecce quam bonum et quam iocundum, etc.

Tyl the daye dawed · this damaiseles daunced,
That men rongen to the resurexioun · and riȝt with that I waked,
And called Kitte my wyf · and Kalote my douȝter—
'Ariseth and reuerenceth · goddes resurrexioun,
And crepeth to the crosse on knees · and kisseth it for a Iuwel!

B. 408. *clarior—amor* RCOBY; LW *om.*

Thow shalt abygge bitere,' quath god · and bond hym with cheynes.
Astrot and alle othere · hudden hem in heornes,
Thei dorst nat loken on oure lorde · the leste of hem alle,
Bote leten hym leden forth which hym luste · and leue whiche hym lykede.
Mony hundrede of aungelis · harpeden tho and songen,
Culpat caro, purgat caro, regnat deus dei caro.
Thenne pipede Pees · of poetes a note,
'Clarior est solito · post maxima nebula phebus;
Post inimicitias · clarior est et amor.
After sharpest shoures,' quath Pees · 'most sheene is the sonne;
Ys no weder warmer · than after watery cloudes,
Nother loue leuere · ne leuere freondes,
Than after werre and wrake · whanne loue and pees beon maistres.
Was neuere werre in this worlde · ne wykkeder enuye,
That Loue, and hym luste · to lauhynge ne brouhte,
And Pees thorgh pacience · alle pereles stoppede.'
'Treuwes,' quath Treuthe · 'thou tellest soth, by Iesus!
Cluppe we in couenaunt · and ech of ous cusse other!'
'And leet no peuple,' quath Pees · 'parceyue that we chide!
For impossible is no thyng · to hym that is al-myghty.'
'Thow seist soth,' quath Ryghtwisnesse · and reuerentliche heo custe
Pees, and Pees heore · *per secula seculorum.*
Misericordia et ueritas obuiauerunt sibi; iusticia et pax osculate sunt.
Treuthe trompede tho, and song · *'Te deum laudamus;'*
And then lutede Loue · in a lowd note,
'Ecce quam bonum et quam iocundum est habitare fratres in unum!'
Tyl the day dawede · these damseles daunsede,
That men rang to the resurreccioun · and with that ich awakede,
And kallyd Kytte my wyf · and Kalote my doughter,
'A-rys, and go reuerence · godes resurreccioun,
And creop on kneos to the croys · and cusse hit for a Iuwel,

C. 449. Astrott P. 451. leten IE; leet F; let TG; leot P. 461. ne EFT; PMI *om.* 462. *From* ITG; PEMF *omit this line.*

For goddes blissed body · it bar for owre bote,
And it afereth the fende · for suche is the myȝte,
May no grysly gost · glyde there it shadweth!'

PASSUS XIX.

Passus xix^us; et explicit Dobet; et incipit Dobest.

THUS I awaked and wrote · what I had dremed,
And diȝte me derely · and dede me to cherche,
To here holy the masse · and to be houseled after.
In myddes of the masse · tho men ȝede to offrynge,
I fel eftsones a-slepe · and sodeynly me mette,
That Pieres the Plowman · was paynted al blody,
And come in with a crosse · bifor the comune peple,
And riȝte lyke in alle lymes · to owre lorde Iesu;
And thanne called I Conscience · to kenne me the sothe.
'Is this Iesus the Iuster?' quod I · 'that Iuwes did to deth?
Or it is Pieres the Plowman! · who paynted hym so rede?'
Quod Conscience, and kneled tho · 'thise aren Pieres armes,
His coloures and his cote-armure · ac he that cometh so blody
Is Cryst with his crosse · conqueroure of Crystene.'
'Why calle ȝe hym Cryst?' quod I · 'sithenes Iuwes calle hym Iesus?
Patriarkes and prophetes · prophecyed bifore,
That alkyn creatures · shulden knelen and bowen,
Anon as men nempned · the name of god Iesu.
Ergo is no name · to the name of Iesus,
Ne none so nedeful to nempne · by nyȝte ne by daye.
For alle derke deuelles · aren adradde to heren it,
And synful aren solaced · and saued bi that name.
And ȝe callen hym Cryst · for what cause, telleth me?

And ryghtfullokest a relyk · non riccher on erthe.
For godes blesside body · hit bar for oure bote,
And hit a-fereth the feonde · for such is the myghte,
May no grysliche gost · glyde ther hit shadeweth!'

Hic explicit passus quartus et ultimus de Dobet.

PASSUS XXII.

Hic incipit passus primus de Dobest.

THUS ich awakede and wrot · what ich hadde dremed,
And dyhte me derly · and dude me to churche,
To huyre holliche the masse · and be housled after.
In myddes of the masse · tho men ȝeden to offrynge,
Ich fel eft-sones a-slepe · and sodeynliche me mette,
That Peers the Plouhman · was peynted al blody,
And cam yn with a croys · by-fore the comune peuple,
And ryght like in alle lymes · to oure lord Iesu;
And thenne calde ich Conscience · to kenne me the sothe.
'Is this Iesus the Iouster?' quath ich · 'that Iuwes duden to dethe,
Other is hit Peers Plouhman? · ho peynted hym so rede?'
Quath Conscience, and kneolede tho · 'these aren Cristes armes,
Hus colours and hus cote-armure · and he that cometh so blody,
Hit is Crist with his crois · conquerour of Crystine.'
'Whi calle ȝe him Crist · siththen Iuwes cald hym Iesus?
Patriarkes and prophetes · propheciede by-fore,
That alle kynne creatures · sholden kneolen and bowen,
A-non as men nempned · the name of god Iesu.
Ergo is no name · to the name of Iesu,
Ne non so neodful to nempne · by nyghte ne by daye.
For alle deorke deoueles · dreden hit to huyre,
And synful ben solacede · and saued by that name.
And ȝe callen hym Crist · for what cause, telleth me?

C. 476. An (*for* And) P.
Passus XXII. 5. fel GT; ful M; felle EIS; feel P. 12. this (*for* these) P. 14. is (*for* his) P. 15. PE *ins.* þat *after* siþthen. 20. Ne IFGT; And PEM.

Is Cryst more of myȝte · and more worthy name
Than Iesu or Iesus · that al owre Ioye come of?'
'Thow knowest wel,' quod Conscience · 'and thow konne resoun,
That knyȝte, kynge, conqueroure · may be o persone.
To be called a kniȝte is faire · for men shal knele to hym;
To be called a kynge is fairer · for he may knyȝtes make;
Ac to be conquerour called · that cometh of special grace,
And of hardynesse of herte · and of hendenesse bothe,
To make lordes of laddes · of londe that he wynneth,
And fre men foule thralles · that folweth nouȝt his lawes.
The Iuwes, that were gentil-men · Iesu thei dispised,
Bothe his lore and his lawe · now ar thei lowe cherlis.
As wyde as the worlde is · wonyeth there none
But vnder tribut and taillage · as tykes and cherles.
And tho that bicome Crysten · by conseille of the baptiste,
Aren frankeleynes, fre men · thorw fullyng that thei toke,
And gentel-men with Iesu · for Iesus was yfulled,
And vppon Caluarye on crosse · ycrouned kynge of Iewes.
It bicometh to a kynge · to kepe and to defende,
And conquerour of conquest · his lawes and his large.
And so dide Iesus the Iewes · he Iustified and tauȝte hem
The lawe of lyf · that last shal euere;
And fended fram foule yueles · feueres and fluxes,
And fro fendes that in hem were · and fals bileue.
Tho was he Iesus of Iewes called · gentel prophete,
And kynge of her kyngdome · and croune bar of thornes.
And tho conquered he on crosse · as conquerour noble;
Myȝt no deth hym fordo · ne adown brynge,
That he ne aros and regned · and rauysshed helle.
And tho was he 'conquerour' called · of quikke and of ded;
For he ȝaf Adam and Eue · and other mo blisse,
That longe hadde leyne bifore · as Lucyferes cherles.

And sith he ȝaf largely · alle his lele lyges

B. 40. yfulled WCY; yfolled L. 44. dide WCOBY; ded L. 47. were WCBY; was L.

Is Crist more of myght · and more worthiere name
Than Iesu other Iesus · that al oure Ioy come of?'
'Thow knowest wel,' quath Conscience · 'and thow conne reson,
That knyght, kyng, conquerour · may be o persone.
To be cald a knyght is fair · for men shal to hym kneole;
To be cald a kyng is fairour · for he may knyghtes make;
And to be cald conquerour · that cometh of special grace,
Of hardynesse of heorte · and of hendeness bothe,
To make lordes of laddes · of londe that he wynneth,
And fre men foule thralles · that folwen nat hus lawes.
The Iuwes that weren gentel-men · Iesu thei dispiseden,
Bothe hus lore and hus lawe · now aren thei lowe cheorles.
As wide as the worlde is · wonyeth ther none
Bote vnder tribut and taillage · as tikes and cheorles.
And tho that by-comen Cristine · by consail of the baptist,
Aren frankelayns and freo · thorgh fullyng that thei toke,
And gentel-men with Iesu · for Iesus was yfulled,
And vp-on Caluarie on croys · y-crouned kyng of Iuwes.
Hit by-cometh for a kyng · to kepen and defende,
And conquerour of hus conqueste · hus laies and hus large.
So dude Iesus the Iuwes · he Iustifiede and tauhte hem
The lawe of the lykyng lyf · that laste shal euere;
And fendede hem fro foule vueles · feueres and fluxes,
And fro feondes that were in hem · and false by-leyue.
Tho was he Iesus of Iuwes cald · gentel prophete,
And kyng of here kyngdom · and corone bar of thornes.
And tho conquered he on croys · as conquerour noble;
Myght no deth hym for-do · ne adoun brynge,
That he ne aros and regnede · and rauesshede helle;
And tho was he 'conquerour' called · of quyke and of dede.
For he ȝaf Adam and Eue · and other mo blisse,
That longe hadde leye by-fore · as Luciferes cheorles;
And tok Lucifer the lothliche · that lorde was of helle,
And bond hym as he is bounde · with bondes of yren.
Ho was hardier than he? · hus heorte blode he shadde,
To maken alle folk freo · that folwen hus lawe.
And sutthe he ȝaf largeliche · all hus leel lege

C. 31. boþe T; *which* PEMFG *omit*. 41. on MIF; with PET. y-crouned IF; crouned EMT; coronede P. 44. Iustefiede P. 60. ȝaf EFG; ȝaue P; *see* l. 54.

Places in paradys · at her partynge hennes,
He may wel be called 'conquerour' · and that is Cryst to mene.
Ac the cause that he cometh thus · with crosse of his passioun,
Is to wissen vs there-wyth · that whan that we ben tempted,
Ther-with to fyȝte and fenden vs · fro fallyng in-to synne,
And se bi his sorwe · that who so loueth Ioye,
To penaunce and to pouerte · he moste putten hym-seluen,
And moche wo in this worlde · willen and suffren.
Ac to carpe more of Cryst · and how he come to that name,
Faithly forto speke · his firste name was Iesus.
Tho he was borne in Bethleem · as the boke telleth,
And cam to take mankynde · kynges and aungeles
Reuerenced hym faire · with richesse of erthe.
Angeles out of heuene · come knelyng and songe,
Gloria in excelsis deo, etc.
Kynges come after · kneled, and offred
Mirre and moche golde · with-outen mercy askynge,
Or any kynnes catel · but knowlechyng hym soeuereigne
Bothe of sonde, sonne, and see · and sithenes thei went
In-to her kyngene kyth · by conseille of angeles.
And there was that worde fulfilled · the which thow of speke;
Omnia celestia, terrestria, flectantur in hoc nomine Iesu.
For alle the angeles of heuene · at his burth kneled,
And al the witte of the worlde · was in tho thre kynges;
Resoun and riȝtwisnesse · and reuth thei offred;
Wherfore and whi · wyse men that tyme,
Maistres and lettred men · *Magy* hem called.
That o kynge cam with resoun · keuered vnder sense.
The secounde kynge sitthe · sothliche offred
Riȝtwisnesse vnder red golde · resouns felawe.
Golde is likned to leute · that last shal euere,
And resoun to riche golde · to riȝte and to treuthe.
The thridde kynge tho cam · knelyng to Iesu,
And presented hym with pitee · apierynge by myrre;
For mirre is mercy to mene · and mylde speche of tonge.
Thre yliche honest thinges · was offred thus at ones,
Thorw thre kynne kynges · knelynge to Iesu.

B. 79. riȝtwisnesse WOY; riȝtfulnesse LCB; *see* l. 84. 90. was L; were WOY.

Places in paradis · at here partyng hennes,
He may beo wel cald 'conquerour' · and that is Crist to mene.
Ac the cause whi he cometh thus · with croys and hus passion,
Ys, to wissen ous ther-with · that when we beo tempted,
Ther-with to fighten and fenden ous · fro fallyng in-to synne,
And seo by hus sorwe · that ho so loueth Ioye,
To penaunce and to pouerte · he mot putte hym-selue,
And muche wo in this worlde · wilnen and suffren.

Ac to carpe more of Crist · and how he cam to that name,
Faithly for to speke · hus furste name was Iesus.
Tho he was bore in Bethleem · as the book telleth,
And cam to take mankynde · kynges and aungeles
Reuerencede hym ryght faire · with richesse of eorthe.
Aungeles of heuene comen · kneolede and songen,
Gloria in excelsis deo.
Kynges comen after · kneolede and offride
Muche gold and murre · with-oute mercy askynge,
Other eny kynne catel · bote knewelechede hym souereyn
Bothe of sand, sonne, and see · and sitthen thei wente
In-to here kyngene kutthe · by counsail of aungeles,
And ther was that word fulfild · the which thou of speke;
Omnia celestia, terrestria, flectantur in hoc nomine Iesu.
For alle the aungeles of heuene · at hus burthe kneolede,
And al the wit of the worlde · was in tho thre kynges;
Reson and ryghtwisnesse · and reuthe thei offrede;
Where-fore and whi · wise men that tyme,
Maistres and lettred men · *Magi* hem calde.
That on kynge cam with reson · ycouerid vnder sense;
The secounde kyng sitthen · sothliche he offrede
Ryghtwisnesse, vnder red gold · resones felawe.
Gold is likned to leaute · that laste shal euere,
And reson to ryche gold · to right and to treuthe.
The thridde kynge cam tho · and kneolede to Iesu,
And presentide hym with pite · aperynge by mirre;
For mirre is mercy to mene · and mylde speche of tonge.
Eorthliche honeste thynges · was offred thus at ones
Thorgh thre kynde kynges · kneolyng to Iesu.

C. 73. Reuerencide P. 77. knewelichede P. 82. (1*st*) þe EMFGT; þat P. 83. ryghtwisnesse EMF; ryghtfulnesse PGT; *see* l. 88. 84. Werefore P. 89. licknede P.

Ac for alle thise preciouse presentz · owre lorde prynce Iesus
Was neyther kynge ne conquerour · til he gan to wexe
In the manere of a man · and that by moche sleight;
As it bicometh a conquerour · to konne many sleightes,
And many wyles and witte · that wil ben a leder;
And so did Iesu in his dayes · who so had tyme to telle it.
Sum tyme he suffred · and sum tyme he hydde hym;
And sum tyme he fauȝte faste · and fleigh otherwhile.
And some tyme he gaf good · and graunted hele bothe,
Lyf and lyme · as hym lyste, he wrought.
As kynde is of a conquerour · so comsed Iesu,
Tyl he had alle hem · that he for bledde.
In his Iuuente this Iesus · atte Iuwen feste
Water in-to wyn tourned · as holy writ telleth,
And there bigan god · of his grace to Dowel.
For wyn is lykned to lawe · and lyf of holynesse;
And lawe lakked tho · for men loued nouȝt her enemys.
And Cryst conseilleth thus · and comaundeth bothe,
Bothe to lered and to lewed · to louye owre enemys.
So atte feste firste · as I bifore tolde,
Bygan god, of his grace · and goodnesse, to Dowel:
And tho was he cleped and called · nouȝt holy Cryst, but Iesu,
A faunt fyn, ful of witte · *filius Marie.*
For bifor his moder Marie · made he that wonder,
That she furste and formest · ferme shulde bilieue,
That he thorw grace was gete · and of no gome elles.
He wrouȝt that bi no witte · but thorw worde one,
After the kynde that he come of · there comsed he Dowel.
And whan he was woxen more · in his moder absence,
He made lame to lepe · and ȝaue liȝte to blynde,
And fedde with two fisshes · and with fyue loues
Sore afyngred folke · mo than fyue thousande.
Thus he conforted carful · and cauȝte a gretter name,
The whiche was Dobet · where that he went.
For defe thorw his doynges to here · and dombe speke he made,

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B. 103. fore (*for* for) L.

Ac for alle thes preciose presentes · oure lord prince Iesus
Was nother kyng ne conquerour · til he comsede wexe
In the manere of a man · and that by muche sleithe;
As hit by-cometh for a conquerour · to conne menye sleithes,
And menye wiles and wyt · that wol be a ledere;
And so dude Iesus in hus dayes · ho so dorste tellen hit.
Som tyme he suffrede · and som tyme he hidde hym;
And som tyme he fauhte faste · and fleih other-while.
And som tyme he gaf good · and grauntede hele,
Bothe lyf and lyme · as hym luste, he wrouhte.
As kynde is of a conquerour · so comsede Iesus,
Til he hadde alle hem · that he for bledde.
In hus Iuuente this Iesus · at the Iuwene feste
Turned water in-to wyn · as holy writ telleth,
And ther by-gan god of hus grace · gretliche to Dowel.
For wyn is lykned to lawe · and lyf-holynesse;
And lawe lackede tho · for men louede nat here enemys.
And Crist counsaileth thus · and comaundeth bothe
To lerede and to lewede · for to loue oure enemys.
So at that feste furst · as ich by-fore tolde,
By-gan god of hus grace · and of hus goodness to Do-wel;
And tho was he cleped and cald · nat onliche Crist, bote Iesu,
A fauntekyn ful of wytt · *filius Marie.*
For by-fore hus moder Marie · made he that wonder,
That sheo furst and formest · sholde ferme by-leyue,
That he thorgh grace was gete · and of no gome elles.
He wrouhte that by no wyt · bote by worde one,
After the kynde that he cam of · ther comsede he Dowel.
And whenne he was woxen more · in hus modres absence,
He made lame to leepe · and ȝaf light to blynd,
And fedde with two fisshes · and with fyue loues
Sore a-fyngred fele folke · mo than fyf thousand.
Thus he comfortede careful · and cauhte a grettere name,
The whiche was Dobet · wher that he wente.
For deue thorgh hus doynges · and dombe speke and herde,

C. 96. prince TGF; PEM *om.* 98. a EMFTG; P *om.* 104. he MFGT; PE *om.* 106. kynde MFGT; PE *om.* 108. þe MF; PEGT *om.* 112. enemys T; enemy*us* F; enmys M; enemy PEG; *see* l. 114. 116. to MTG; PEF *om.* 117. cleped MEFT; clipede P. 125. PE *ins.* þe *after 2nd* to. 126. two EGT; to PMF. 127. Sore MFTG; So PE.

And alle he heled and halp · that hym of grace asked.
And tho was he called in contre · of the comune peple,
For the dedes that he did · *fili Dauid, Iesus!*
For Dauid was dou3tiest · of dedes in his tyme,
The berdes tho songe · *Saul interfecit mille, et Dauid decem milia;*
For-thi the contre there Iesu cam · called hym *fili Dauid,*
And nempned hym of Nazereth · and no man so worthi
To be kaisere or kynge · of the kyngedome of Iuda,
Ne ouer Iuwes Iustice · as Iesus was, hem thou3te.
Where-of Caiphas hadde enuye · and other of the Iewes,
And forto done hym to deth · day and ny3te thei casten;
Kulleden hym on crosse-wyse · at Caluarie on Fryday,
And sithen buryden his body · and beden that men sholde
Kepen it fro ni3t-comeres · with kny3tes y-armed,
For no frendes shulde hym fecche · for prophetes hem tolde,
That that blessed body · of burieles shulde rise,
And gone in-to Galile · and gladen his apostles,
And his moder Marie; · thus men bifore demed.
The kny3tes that kepten it · biknewe it hem-seluen,
That angeles and archangeles · ar the day spronge,
Come knelynge to the corps · and songen, '*Christus resurgens*'
Verrey man bifor hem alle · and forth with hem he 3ede.
The Iewes preyed hem pees · and bisou3te the kny3tes
Telle the comune that there cam · a compaignye of his aposteles,
And bywicched hem as thei woke · and awey stolen it.
Ac Marie Magdeleyne · mette hym bi the wey,
Goynge toward Galile · in godhed and manhed,
And lyues and lokynge · and she aloude cryde,
In eche a compaignye there she cam · '*Christus resurgens!*'
Thus cam it out that Cryst ouer-cam · rekeuered and lyued;
Sic oportet Christum pati, et intrare, etc.;
For that that wommen witeth · may nou3te wel be conseille!
Peter perceyued al this · and pursued after,
Bothe Iames and Iohan · Iesu for to seke,

B. 127. halpe L. 157. L *om. 2nd* þat.

And alle he heled and halp · that hym of grace askyde.
Tho he was callyd in the contreo · of the comune peuple,
For the dedes that he dude · *'fili David, Iesus!*
For Dauid was the douhtiest · of dedus in hus tyme;
The buyrdes tho songen · *Saul interfecit mille, et Dauid decem milia;*
For-thi the contreye ther Iesu cam · cald hym *fili Dauid,*
Nempnede hym of Nazareth · and no man so worthi
To beo caiser other kyng · of the kyngdom of Iuda,
Ne ouer Iuwes Iustice · as Iesus was, hem thouhte.
Her-of had Cayfas enuye · and othere Iuwes,
And for to do hym to dethe · day and nyght thei casten,
And culled hym on croys-wyse · at Caluarye, on a Fryday,
And sutthen buriede hus body · and beden that men sholde
Kepen hit fro nyght-commeres · with knyghtes y-armed,
For no freonde sholde hit fecche · for prophetes hem tolde,
That that blessed body · of buriels sholde aryse,
And gon in-to Galile · and gladen hus apostoles,
And hus moder Marie; · thus me by-fore deuynede.
The knyghtes that kepten hit · by-knewen hem-selue,
That aungeles and archaungeles · ar the day spronge,
Comen kneolynge · to that corps, and songen,
'Christus rex resurgens' · and hit aros after,
Verrei man by-fore hem alle · and forth with hem ȝeode.
The Iuwes preyede hem of pees · and preyede tho knyghtes
Telle the comune, that ther cam · a companye of hus aposteles,
And by-wicched hem as thei woke · and a-way stelyn hit.
Ac Marie Magdalene · mette him by the weye,
Goynge to-ward Galile · in god-hede and man-hede,
And lyues and lokynge · and heo aloud cryede,
In eche companye ther heo cam · *'Christus resurgens.'*
Thus cam hit out that Crist ouer-cam · rekeouered, and lyuede;
Sic oportet Christum pati, et intrare gloriam suam,
For that that wommen witeth · may nat wel be consail!
Peter parceyuede al this · and porsuede after,
Bothe Iames and Iohan · Iesu to seke,

C. 135. þo EMG; so P. 139. was MFGT; PE *om.* 141. deþe EMG; diþe P. 146. buriels E; burielesse P. 150. and EFGTM; P *om.* 156. bywocched P. 157. him MFGT; hem PE. 161. leyuede P. 162. PFT *omit 2nd* þat; *found in* EMG.

Tadde and ten mo · with Thomas of Ynde.
And as alle thise wise wyes · weren togideres,
In an hous al bishette · and her dore ybarred,
Cryst cam in, and al closed · bothe dore and ȝates,
To Peter and to his aposteles · and seyde '*pax vobis!*'
And toke Thomas by the hande · and tauȝte hym to grope,'
And fele with his fyngres · his flesshelich herte.
Thomas touched it · and with his tonge seyde,
'*Deus meus et dominus meus.*
Thow art my lorde, I bileue · god, lorde Iesu!
Thow deydest and deth tholedest · and deme shalt vs alle,
And now art lyuynge and lokynge · and laste shalt euere!'
Crist carped thanne · and curteislich seyde,
'Thomas, for thow trowest this · and trewliche bileuest it,
Blessed mote thow be · and be shalt for euere.
And blessed mote thei alle be · in body and in soule,
That neuere shal se me in siȝte · as thow doste nouthe,
And lellich bileuen al this · I loue hem and blesse hem;
Beati qui non viderunt, et crediderunt, etc.'
And whan this dede was done · Dobest he tauȝte,
And ȝaf Pieres power · and pardoun he graunted
To alle manere men · mercy and forȝyfnes,
Hym myȝte men to assoille · of alle manere synnes,
In couenant that thei come · and knowleche to paye,
To Pieres pardon the Plowman · *redde quod debes.*
Thus hath Pieres powere · be his pardoun payed,
To bynde and to vnbynde · bothe here and elles-where,
And assoille men of alle synnes · saue of dette one.
Anone after an heigh · vp in-to heuene
He went, and wonyeth there · and wil come atte laste,
And rewarde hym riȝte wel · that *reddit quod debet*—
Payeth parfitly · as pure trewthe wolde.
And what persone payeth it nouȝt · punysshen he thinketh,
And demen hem at domes daye · bothe quikke and ded;
The gode to the godhede · and to grete Ioye,
And wikke to wonye · in wo with-outen ende.'

B. 176. *et crediderunt* COBY; LW *om.* 181. knewleche L. 184. L *om.* where. 188. L *ins.* wil *after* And.

Taddee and ten mo · with Thomas of Ynde;
And as alle these wise wyes · weren to-gederes
In an hous al by-shutt · and here dore barred,
Crist cam yn, and al was closed · bothe dore and ȝates,
To Peter and to hus aposteles · and seyde, '*pax uobis!*'
And took Thomas by the hand · and tauhte hym to grope,
And fele with hus fyngres · hus fleshliche heorte.
Thomas touchede hit · and with hus tunge seyde,
'*Dominus meus et deus meus,*
Thow art my lord, ich by-leyue · god, lord Iesu,
That deydest and deth tholedest · and deme shalt ous alle,
And now art lyuynge and lokynge · and laste shalt euere.'
Crist carpede thenne · and corteisliche seide,
'Thomas, for thou trowest this · and trewely by-leyuest hit,
Yblessed mote thou beo · and beo shalt for euere;
And blessed moten thei beo · in body and in soule,
That neuere shullen seo in syht · as thou seost nouthe,
And leelly by-leyuen al this · ich loue hem and blesse hem;
Beati qui non uiderunt, et crediderunt.'
And when this dede was don · Dobest he thouhte,
And ȝaf Peers power · and pardon he grauntede
To alle manere of men · mercy and forȝyuenesse,
And ȝaf hym myghte to asoylye men · of alle manere synnes,
In couenaunt that thei come · and kneweliched to paye
To Peers pardon the Plouhman · *redde quod debes.*
Thus haueth Peers power · beo hus pardon payed,
To bynde and vnbynde · bothe here and elleswher,
And assoille of alle synnes · saue of dette one.
A-non after an hyh · vp in-to heuene
He wente, and woneth there · and wol come atte laste,
And rewardy him right wel · that *reddit quod debet,*
Payeth now parfitliche · as pure treuthe wolde.
And what persone payeth hit nat · punysshen he thenketh,
And demen hem at domesday · bothe quyke and dede;
The gode to the god-hede · and to grete Ioye,
And wyckede to wonye · in wo with-outen ende.'

C. 165. Taddee EM; Tadee PG. 166. as FMGT; PE *om.* wyes FGT; weyes P. 170. to grope EMFGT; þo grepe P. 173. art MFT; ert PEG. 184. an (*for* and) P. 187. þe T; PEMFG *om.* 189. elleswer P. 193. him FT; hym G; hem PEM. 195. wat P. 196. hem EFG; hym PT.

Thus Conscience of Crist · and of the crosse carped,
And conseilled me to knele ther-to · and thanne come, me thou3te,
One *spiritus paraclitus* · to Pieres and to his felawes;
In lyknesse of a li3tnynge · he ly3te on hem alle,
And made hem konne and knowe · alkyn langages.
I wondred what that was · and wagged Conscience,
And was afered of the ly3te · for in fyres lyknesse
Spiritus paraclitus · ouer-spradde hem alle.
Quod Conscience, and kneled · 'this is Crystes messager,
And cometh fro the grete god · and Grace is his name.
Knele now,' quod Conscience · 'and if thow canst synge,
Welcome hym and worshipe hym · with "*veni, creator spiritus.*"
Thanne songe I that songe · and so did many hundreth,
And cryden with Conscience · 'help vs, god of grace!'
And thanne bigan Grace · to go with Piers Plowman,
And conseilled hym and Conscience · the comune to sompne—
'For I wil dele to-daye · and dyuyde grace,
To alkynnes creatures · that kan her fyue wittes,
Tresore to lyue by · to her lyues ende,
And wepne to fy3te with · that wil neure faille.
For Antecryst and his · al the worlde shal greue,
And acombre the, Conscience · but if Cryst the helpe.
And fals prophetes fele · flatereres and glosers
Shullen come, and be curatoures · ouer kynges and erlis,
And Pryde shal be pope · prynce of holycherche,
Coueytyse and Vnkyndenesse · cardinales hym to lede.
For-thi,' quod Grace, 'er I go · I wil gyue 3ow tresore,
And wepne to fi3te with · whan Antecryst 3ow assailleth.'
And gaf eche man a grace · to gye with hym-seluen,
That ydelnesse encombre hym nou3t · envye, ne pryde,
Diuisiones graciarum sunt, etc.
Some he 3af wytte · with wordes to shewe,
Witte to wynne her lyflode with · as the worlde asketh,
As prechoures and prestes · and prentyces of lawe,
Thei lelly to lyue · by labóure of tonge,
And bi witte to wissen other · as Grace hem wolde teche.

B. 211. kan L; han WCOYB. 226. prentyce L (*wrongly*).

Thus Conscience of Crist · and of the croys carpede,
And consailede me to kneole ther-to · and thenne cam, me thouhte,
On *spiritus paraclitus* · to Peers and to hus felawes,
In liknesse of a lyghtnynge · a-lyghte on hem alle,
And made hem conne and knowe · alle kynne languages.
Ich wondrede what that was · and waggede Conscience,
And was a-fered for the lyght · for in fuyres lyknesse
Spiritus paraclitus · ouer-spradde hem alle.
Quath Conscience tho, and kneolede · 'this is Cristes messager,
And cometh fro the grete god · Grace is hus name.
Kneole now,' quath Conscience · 'and yf thow conne synge,
Welcome hym and worshupe hym · with "*veni, creator spiritus.*"'
And ich sang that song tho · and so dude meny hondred,
And cryden with Conscience · 'help ous, god of grace!'
Tho by-gan Grace · to go with Peers the Plouhman,
And consailede hym and Conscience · the comune to someny—
'For ich wolle dele to-day · and diuyde grace
To alle kynne creatures · that can hus fif wittes;
Tresour to lyue by · to here lyues ende,
And wepne to fight with · that wol neuere faille.
For Antecrist and hise · shal al the worlde greue,
And encombry the, Conscience · bote yf Crist the helpe.
And fele false prophetes · flaterers and glosers
Shullen come, and be curatours · ouer kynges and erles.
Thanne shal Pruyde be pope · and pryns of holychurche,
Couetise and Vnkyndenesse · cardinales hym to lede.
For-thi,' quath Grace, 'ar ich go · ich wole gyue 3ou tresour,
And wepne to fyghte with · whanne Antecrist 3ou assaileth.'
And gaf ech man a grace · to gye with hym-self,
That ydelnesse ne encombre hem nat · ne enuye, ne pruyde;
Diuisiones graciarum sunt.
To somme men he 3af wit · with wordes to shewe,
To wynne with truthe · that the worlde asketh,
As preostes and prechours · and prentises of lawe,
Thei to lyue leelly · by labour of tounge,
And by wit to wyssen othere · as Grace wolde hem teche.

C. 202. licknesse P. lyghtynge PG. 203. conne EMG; come PT. 205. a-ferede P. 219. woɪdle P. 229. wiþ MEFT; PG *om.*

And some he kenned crafte · and kunnynge of syȝte,
With sellyng and buggynge · her bylyf to wynne,
And some he lered to laboure · a lele lyf and a trewe,
And somme he tauȝte to tilie · to dyche and to thecche,
To wynne with her lyflode · by lore of his techynge.
And some to dyuyne and diuide · noumbres to kenne;
And some to compas craftily · and coloures to make;
And some to se and to saye · what shulde bifalle,
Bothe of wel and of wo · telle it or it felle,
As astronomyenes thorw astronomye · and philosophres wyse.
And some to ryde and to recoeure · that vnriȝtfully was wonne;
He wissed hem wynne it aȝeyne · thorw wightnesse of handes,
And fecchen it fro fals men · with Foluyles lawes.
And some he lered to lyue · in longynge to ben hennes,
In pouerte and in penaunce · to preye for alle Crystene.
And alle he lered to be lele · and eche a crafte loue other,
And forbad hem alle debate · that none were amonge hem.
'Thowgh some be clenner than somme · ȝe se wel,' quod Grace,
'That he that vseth the fairest crafte · to the foulest I couth haue put hym,
Thinketh alle,' quod Grace · 'that grace cometh of my ȝifte;
Loke that none lakke other · but loueth alle as bretheren.
And who that moste maistries can · be myldest of berynge,
And crouneth Conscience kynge · and maketh Crafte ȝowre stuward,
And after Craftes conseille · clotheth ȝow and fede.
For I make Pieres the Plowman · my procuratour and my reve,
And regystrere to receyue · *redde quod debes.*
My prowor and my plowman · Piers shal ben on erthe,
And for to tulye treuthe · a teme shal he haue.'
Grace gaue Piers a teme · foure gret oxen;
That on was Luke, a large beste · and a lowe-chered,
And Marke, and Mathew the thrydde · myghty bestes bothe,
And Ioigned to hem one Iohan · most gentil of alle,
The prys nete of Piers plow · passyng alle other.

And somme he kende craftes · and connynge of syghte,
With syllynge and byggynge · here by-lyue to wynne.
And somme he lerede to laboure · a londe and a watere,
And lyue by that labour · a leel lyf and a trewe.
And somme he tauhte to tulye · to theche and to coke,
As here wit wold · when the tyme come.
And somme to dyuyne and dyuyde · numbres to kenne,
And craftely to compassen · and colours to make.
And somme to seo and to seye · what sholde by-falle
Bothe of wele and of wo · and be war by-fore,
As astronomyens thorw astronomye · and philosophers wise.
And somme to ryde and rekeuere · that vnryghtfulliche was wonne;
He wissede men wynnen hit aȝeyn · thorgh wyghtnesse of handes,
And fecchen hit fro false men · with Foleuyles lawes.
And somme he lerede to lyue · in longynge to be hennes,
In pouerte and in pacience · to preye for alle Crystyne.
And alle he lerede to beo leell · and eche a craft loue othere,
Nother bost ne debat · beo among hem alle.
'Thauh somme be clannere than some · ȝe seon wel,' quath Grace,
'That alle craft and connynge · cam of my ȝyfte.
Loke that non lacken other · bote louye as bretheren,
And he that most maistries can · beo myldest of berynge.
And coroneth Conscience kyng · and maketh Craft ȝowre styward,
And after Craftes consail · clotheth ȝow and fedeth.
For ich make Peers Plouhman · my procuratour and my reue,
And registrer to receyuen · *redde quod debes.*
My prower and my plouhman · Peers shal beo on erthe;
And for to tulye treuthe · a teome shal he haue.'
Grace gaf to Peers a teome · of foure grete oxen;
That on was Luc, a large beest · and a louh-chered,
Marc, and Matheu the thirde · myghty beestes bothe;
And Ioyned til hem on Iohan · most gentil of alle,
The prys neet of Peers plouh · passynge alle othere.

C. 234. PE *ins.* hem *after* kende. 237. *2nd* a EMFGT; P *om.* 238. *1st* to MFGT; PE *om.* þeche E; þecche MT; teche PF. 241. craftely F; PEGT *om.* 248. lererede P. 252. clannore P. 254. broþrene P. 260. prower EG; prowour F; puruyour M; power P. 263. louh-chyrede P.

And Grace gaue Pieres · of his goodnesse, foure stottis,
Al that his oxen eryed · they to harwe after.
On hy3te Austyne · and Ambrose an-other,
Gregori the grete clerke · and Ierome the gode;
Thise foure, the feithe to teche · folweth Pieres teme,
And harwed in an handwhile · al holy scripture,
Wyth two harwes that thei hadde · an olde and a newe,
Id est, vetus testamentum et nouum.
And Grace gaue greynes · the cardynales vertues,
And sewe hem in mannes soule · and sithen he tolde her names.
Spiritus prudencie · the firste seed hy3te,
And who so eet that · ymagyne he shulde,
Ar he did any dede · deuyse wel the ende;
And lerned men a ladel bugge · with a longe stele,
That cast for to kepe a crokke · to saue the fatte abouen.
The secounde seed hi3te · *spiritus temperancie.*
He that ete of that seed · hadde suche a kynde,
Shulde neuere mete ne mochel drynke · make hym to swelle,
Ne sholde no scorner ne scolde · oute of skyl hym brynge,
Ne wynnynge, ne welthe · of worldeliche ricchesse,
Waste worde of ydelnesse · ne wykked speche meue;
Shulde no curyous clothe · comen on hys rugge,
Ne no mete in his mouth · that maister Iohan spiced.
The thridde seed that Pieres sewe · was *spiritus fortitudinis.*
And who so eet of that seed · hardy was eure
To suffre al that god sent · sykenesse and angres;
My3te no lesynge ne lyere · ne losse of worldely catel
Maken hym for any mournynge · that he nas merye in soule,
And bolde and abydynge · bismeres to suffre,
And playeth al with pacyence · *et parce michi, domine,*
And couered hym vnder conseille · of Catoun the wyse;
Esto forti animo, cum sis dampnatus inique.
The fierthe seed that Pieres sewe · was *spiritus iusticie,*
And he that eet of that seed · shulde be euere trewe
With god, and nou3t agast · but of gyle one.
For gyle goth so pryuely · that good faith other-while

B. 270. hem W; it LCOBY. 280. wordeliche L.

And sutthe Grace of hus goodnesse · gaf Peers foure stottes.
Al that hus oxen ereden · thei to harwen after.
On hihte Austyn · and Ambrosie another,
Gregori the grete clerk · and Ierom the goode.
Theose foure, the faith to teche · folwede Peers teom,
And harowede in an hand-whyle · al holy scripture,
With to eythes that thei hadden · an olde and a newe;
Vetus testamentum et nouum.
And Grace gaf to Peers greynes · cardinales uertues,
And sewe hit in mannes soule · and sitthen he tolde here names.
Spiritus prudencie · the furste sed hihte;
That ho so eet that seed · ymagenye he sholde,
Er he dude eny dede · deuyse wel the ende;
And lerede men a ladel bygge · with a long stele,
That cast for to kele a crokke · and saue the fatte aboue.
The secunde seed highte · *spiritus temperancie;*
He that eet of that seed · hadde suche a kynde,
Sholde neuere mete ne myschief · make hym to swelle;
Ne sholde no scornere · out of skyle hym brynge,
Nother wynnynge, ne welthe · of worldliche richesse,
Wast word, ne ydelnesse · ne wyckede speche meoue.
Sholde no curiouse clothe · come on hus rygge,
Nother mete in hus mouthe · that maister Iohan spicede.
The thrydde seod that Peers sewe · was *spiritus fortitudinis;*
And ho so eet of that seed · hardy was he euere
To suffren al that god sente · syknesses and angres;
Myghte no lyere with lesynges · ne loos of worldly catell
Make hym for eny mournyng · that he ne was mury in soule,
And bold of a-bydyng · busemares to suffren,
And plede with pacience · and *parce michi, domine;*
And keouered hym vnder consail · of Caton the wise,
Esto forti animo · cum sis dampnatus inique.
The furthe seed that Peers sewe · was *spiritus iusticie;*
And he that eet of that seed · sholde be euere trewe
With god, and nat a-gast · bote of gyle one.
For gyle goth so priuely · that good faithe other-whyle

C. 272. wyle PG. 277, 282. eet MFG; eete P. 283. to MFT; PEG *om.* 285. wordliche P. 290. eet MFG; ete PE. 292. ne MFGT; no PE. wordly PG. 298. *spiritus iusticie* EMFGT; P has a blank space. 299. euere M; euene PEGT. trywe P. 301. wyle P.

May nouȝte ben aspyed · for *spiritus iusticie.*
Spiritus iusticie · spareth nouȝte to spille
Hem that ben gulty · and forto correcte
The kynge, ȝif he falle · in gylte or in trespasse.
For counteth he no kynges wratthe · whan he in courte sitteth
To demen as a domes-man; · adradde was he neure,
Noither of duke ne of deth · that he ne dede the lawe,
For present or for preyere · or any prynces lettres;
He dede equite to alle · euene-forth his powere.
Thise foure sedes Pieres sewe · and sitthe he did hem harwe

Wyth olde lawe and newe lawe · that loue myȝte wexe
Amonge the foure vertues · and vices destroye.
For comunelich in contrees · kammokes and wedes
Fouleth the fruite in the felde · there thei growe togyderes;
And so don vices · vertues worthy.
Quod Piers, 'harweth alle that kunneth kynde witte · bi conseille of this doctours,
And tulyeth after her techynge · the cardinale vertues.'
'Aȝeines thi greynes,' quod Grace · 'bigynneth for to ripe,
Ordeigne the an hous, Piers · to herberwe in thi cornes.'
'By god! Grace,' quod Piers · 'ȝe moten gyue tymbre,
And ordeyne that hous · ar ȝe hennes wende.'
And Grace gaue hym the crosse · with the croune of thornes,
That Cryst vpon Caluarye · for mankynde on pyned,
And of his baptesme and blode · that he bledde on rode
He made a maner morter · and Mercy it hiȝte.
And there-with Grace bigan · to make a good foundement,
And watteled it and walled it · with his peynes and his passioun,
And of al holywrit · he made a rofe after,
And called that hous Vnite · holicherche on Englisshe.
And whan this dede was done · Grace deuised
A carte, hyȝte Cristendome · to carye Pieres sheues;
And gaf hym caples to his carte · Contricioun and Confessioun,
And made Presthode hayward · the while hym-self went
As wyde as the worlde is · with Pieres to tulye treuthe.

B. 315. quod Piers L; CBY *om.* quod.

May nat be aspied · thorw *spiritus iusticie.*
Spiritus iusticie · spareth nat to spille
Hem that beoth gulty · and for to corecte
The kyng, and the kyng falle · in eny thynge gulty.
For counteth he no kynges wraththe · when he in court sytteth
To deme as a domesman; · adrad was he neuere,
Nother of duk ne of deth · that he ne doth the lawe,
For present other for preyoure · othere eny princes letteres;
He dude equyte to alle · euene-forth hus knowynge.
Theese foure seedes Peeres sewe · and sutthen he dude hem harwen
With olde lawe and newe lawe · that loue myghte wexe
Amonge these foure vertues · and vices destruyen.
For comunliche in contreies · cammokes and weodes
Fouleth the frut in the felde · ther thei growen to-gederes;
And so doth vices vertues · 'and for-thi,' quath Peers,
'Harweth alle that conneth kynde wit · by counsail of theose doctours,
And tulyeth after here techynge · the cardinale vertues.'
'Aȝeynst that thi greynes,' quath Grace · 'bygynneth to growe,
Ordeyne the an hous, Peers · to herberghen in thi cornes.'
'By god, Grace,' quath Peers · 'ȝe mote gyue me tymber,
And ordeyne that hous · er ȝe hennes wende.'
And Grace gaf hym the croys · with the corone of thornes,
That Crist vp-on Caluarie · for mankynde on peynede;
And of hus baptisme and blod · that he bledde on rode
He made a maner morter · and Mercy hit hihte.
And ther-with Grace by-gan · to make a good foundement,
And watelide hit and wallyde hit · with hus peynes and hus passion,
And of alle holy writt · he made a roof after,
And cald that hous Vnite · holychurche in Englishe.
And whanne this dede was don · Grace deuysede
A cart, hihte Cristendome · to carien home Peers sheues;
And gaf hym capeles to hus cart · Contricion with Confession,
And made Preosthood haiwarde · the while hym-self wente
As wide as the worlde is · with Peers to tulye treuthe,

C. 302. aspiede P. 312. newe EMFGT; with newe P. 316. an vertues PT; *but* EMFG *omit* an. 321. god MFGT; godes PE. 322. her (*for* er) P. wennde P. 324. one (*for* on) P. 334. wile P.

Now is Pieres to the plow · and Pruyde it aspyde,
And gadered hym a grete oest · to greuen he thinketh
Conscience and al Crystene · and cardinale vertues,
Blowe hem doune and breke hem · and bite atwo the mores;
And sente forth Surquydous · his seriaunt of armes,
And his spye Spille-loue · one Speke-yuel-byhynde.
Thise two come to Conscience · and to Crystene peple,
And tolde hem tydynges · 'that tyne thei shulde the sedes,
That Pieres there hadde ysowen · the cardynal vertues;
And Pieres berne worth broke · and thei that ben in Vnite
Shulle come out, and Conscience · and ȝowre two caples,
Confessioun and Contricioun · and ȝowre carte the Byleue
Shal be coloured so queyntly · and keuered vnder owre sophistrie,
That Conscience shal nouȝte · knowe by contricioun,
Ne by confessioun · who is Cristene or hethen,
Ne no maner marchaunt · that with moneye deleth,
Where he wynne wyth riȝte · with wronge, or with vsure.
With suche coloures and queyntise · cometh Pryde y-armed,
With the lorde that lyueth after · the luste of his body,
To wasten, on welfare · and on wykked kepynge,
Al the worlde in a while · thorw owre witte,' quod Pruyde.
Quod Conscience to alle Crystene tho · 'my conseille is to wende
Hastiliche in-to Vnyte · 'and holde we vs there,
And preye we that a pees were · in Piers berne the Plowman.
For witterly I wote wel · we beth nouȝte of strengthe
To gone agayne Pryde · but Grace were with vs.'
And thanne cam Kynde Wytte · Conscience to teche,
And cryde and comaunded · al Crystene peple,
For to deluen a dyche · depe a-boute Vnite,
That holy-cherche stode in Vnite · as it a pyle were.
Conscience comaunded tho · al Crystene to delue,
And make a muche mote · that myȝte ben a strengthe,
To helpe holycherche · and hem that it kepeth.
Thanne alkyn Crystene · saue comune wommen,
Repenteden and refused synne · saue they one;
And fals men, flatereres · vsureres and theues,
Lyeres and questmongeres · that were forsworen ofte,

B. 344. conscioun (*for* conscience) L. 360. were COBY; L *om.* 366. flateres L.

And the londe of by-leyue · the lawe of holychurche.
Now is Peeres to the plouh; · Pruyde hit aspide,
And gadered hym a gret ost · greuen he thenketh
Conscience, and alle Cristene · and cardinale uertues,
To blowen hem doun and breken hem · and bite a-two the rotes;
And sente forth sourquidours · hus seriauns of armes,
And hus aspie Spille-loue · on Speke-vuel-by-hynde.
These to-comen to Conscience · and to Cristyne peuple,
And tolden hem tydynges · 'that tyne they sholde
The seedes that syre Peers sewe · the cardinale uertues;
And Peers bern worth to-broke · and thei that ben in Vnite
Shullen come out, and Conscience · and ȝowre two capeles,
Contricion and Confession · and ȝoure cart Bi-leyue
Shal be colered so queyntely · and keouered vnder oure sophistrie,
That Conscience shal nat · knowe by contricion,
Nother by confession · ho is Cristyne other hethene,
Ne no manere marchaunt · that with monye deleth,
Whether he wynne with right · with wrang, other with vsure.
With suche colour and queyntise · cometh Pruyde y-armed,
With the lord that lyueth after · the lust of hus bodye,
To wasten, in welfare · and in wickede kepynge,
Al the worlde in a while · thorugh oure wit,' quath Pruyde.
Quath Conscience to alle Crystyne tho · 'my consail is, we wende
Hastiliche in-to Vnite · and holde we ous there;
Preye we that a pees were · in Peers bern the Plouhman.
For wyterly ich wot wel · we beoth nat of strengthe
To go a-gayn Pruyde · bote Grace with ous were.'
And thenne cam Kynde Wit · Conscience to teche;
He criede, and comaundede · alle Cristyne people
To delue and dike a deop diche · al aboute Vnite,
That holychurche stod in holynesse · as hit were a pile.
Conscience comaundede tho · alle Crystyne to delue,
And make a muche mot · that myghte be a strengthe,
To helpe holychurche · and hem that hit kepeth.
Thenne alle kynne Crystyne · saue comune wommen,
Repentede and refusede synne · saue thei one;
And a sisour and a somenour · that weren for-swore ofte,

C. 340. a-two EFGT; a-to PS. 349. keouerede P. 353. Weder (*for* Wheþer) P. 354. y-armed G; y-armyd ST; armede PE; *see* l. 144. 355. loust P. 372. a sisour MFSGT; assisour P.

Wytynge and willefully · with the false helden,
And for syluer were forswore · sothely thei wist it.
There nas no Crystene creature · that kynde witte hadde,
Saue schrewes one · suche as I spak of,
That he ne halpe a quantite · holynesse to wexe.
Somme thorw bedes-byddynge · and somme thorw pylgrymage,
And other pryue penaunce · and some thorw penyes-delynge.
And thanne welled water · for wikked werkes,
Egerlich ernynge · out of mennes eyen.
Clennesse of the comune · and clerkes clene lyuynge
Made Vnite holicherche · in holynesse to stonde.
'I care nou3te,' quod Conscience · 'though Pryde come nouthe,
The lorde of luste shal be letted · al this lente, I hope.
Cometh,' quod Conscience · '3e Cristene, and dyneth,
That han laboured lelly · al this lente-tyme.
Here is bred yblessed · and goddes body ther-vnder.
Grace thorw goddes worde · gaue Pieres power,
And my3tes to maken it · and men to ete it after,
In helpe of her hele · onys in a moneth,
Or as ofte as they hadden nede · tho that hadde ypayed
To Pieres pardoun the Plowman · *redde quod debes.*'
'How?' quod al the comune · 'thow conseillest vs to 3elde
Al that we owen any wy3te · ar we go to housel?'
'That is my conseille,' quod Conscience · 'and cardynale vertues,
That vche man for3yue other · and that wyl the *paternoster*,
Et dimitte nobis debita nostra, etc.,
And so to ben assoilled · and sithen ben houseled.'
'3e, bawe!' quod a brewere · 'I wil nou3t be reuled,
Bi Iesu! for al 3owre Ianglynge · with *spiritus iusticie*,
Ne after Conscience, by Cryste · whil I can selle
Bothe dregges and draffe · and drawe it at on hole,
Thikke ale and thinne ale · for that is my kynde,
And nou3te hakke after holynesse; · holde thi tonge, Conscience!
Of *spiritus iusticie* · thow spekest moche an ydel!'
'Caytyue,' quod Conscience · 'cursed wrecche!
Vnblessed artow, brewere · but if the god helpe;

B. 385. And W; LCOBY *om.*

Witynge and wilfulliche · with the false thei helden,
And for seluere were for-swore · sothly thei wisten hit.
Ther ne was Cristyne creature · that kynde wit hadde,
That he ne halp a quantyte · holynesse to wexe;
Some by bedes-byddyng · and somme by pilgrimages,
Other othere pryueie penaunces · and somme thorw pansdelynge.
And thenne water wellede · for wyckede werkes,
Egreliche ȝernynge · out of mennys eyen.
Clannesse of the comune · and clerkes clene lyuynge
Made Unite holychurche · in holynesse stonde.
'Ich care nat,' quath Conscience · 'thauh Pruyde come nouthe,
The lord of lust shal beo lett · al this lente, ich hope.
Cometh now,' quath Conscience · 'ȝe Cristyne, and dyneth,
That han labored leelly · al this lente-tyme.
Her is bred yblessid · and godes body ther-vnder.
Grace gaf thorw godes worde · to Peers Plouhman power
And myghte to maken hit · and men for to eten hit,
In help of here hele · ones in a monthe,
Other as ofte as thei hadde neode · thei that hadden payed
To Peers pardon the Plouhman · *redde quod debes.*'
'How?' quath alle the comune · 'consailest thou ous to ȝelde
Al that we owen eny wyght · er we go to housele?'
'That is my consail,' quath Conscience · 'and cardinale vertues,
That iche man forȝiue other · and that wile the pater-noster;
Et dimitte nobis debita nostra, sicut et nos dimittimus, etc.,
And so to beo asoilled · and sytthen beo housled.'
'ȝe, bawe!' quath a brewere · 'ich wol nat beo rueled,
By Iesu! for al ȝoure iangelynge · after *spiritus iusticie*,
Ne after Conscience, by Crist · for ich couthe selle
Bothe dregges and draf · and drawe at one hole
Thicke ale and thynne ale · and that is my kynde,
And nat to hacke after holynesse; · hold thy tonge, Conscience!
Of *spiritus iusticie* · thow spekest muche an ydel!'
'Caitif,' quath Conscience · 'corsede wreche!
Unblessed art thow, brewere · bote yf god the helpe;

C. 373. Whitynge P. 376. to MFSGT; PE *om.* 378. Oþe (*for* Oþer) P. 383. PEG *insert* now *after* nat. 384. loust P. 390. mounthe P. 392. þe FSTG; PEM *om.* 396. *From* T; *also in* MFSG; PE *omit this line.* *dimittimus* is in F only. 397. asoillede P. 398. ruelede P. 406. art MFST; ert PEG.

But thow lyue by lore · of *spiritus iusticie*,
The chief seed that Pieres sewe · ysaued worstow neure.
But Conscience the comune fede · and cardynale vertues,
Leue it wel thei ben loste · bothe lyf and soule.'
'Thanne is many man ylost' · quod a lewed vycory,
'I am a curatour of holykyrke · and come neure in my tyme
Man to me, that me couth telle · of cardinale vertues,
Or that acounted Conscience · at a cokkes fether or an hennes!
I knewe neure cardynal · that he ne cam fro the pope,
And we clerkes, whan they come · for her comunes payeth,
For her pelure and her palfreyes mete · and piloures that hem folweth.
The comune *clamat cotidie* · eche a man to other,
'The contre is the curseder · that cardynales come inne;
And there they ligge and lenge moste · lecherye there regneth:'—
For-thi,' quod this vicori · 'be verrey god, I wolde
That no cardynal come · amonge the comune peple,
But in her holynesse · holden hem stille
At Auynoun, amonge the Iuwes · *cum sancto sanctus eris, etc.*,
Or in Rome, as here rule wole · the reliques to kepe;
And thow, Conscience, in kynges courte · and shuldest neure come thennes,
And Grace, that thow gredest so of · gyour of alle clerkes,
And Pieres with his newe plow · and eke with his olde,
Emperour of al the worlde · that alle men were Cristene!
Inparfyt is that pope · that al peple shulde helpe,
And sendeth hem that sleeth suche · as he shulde saue;
And wel worth Piers the Plowman · that pursueth god in doynge,
Qui pluit super iustos · et iniustos at ones,
And sent the sonne to saue · a cursed mannes tilthe,
As bryȝte as to the best man · and to the beste woman.
Riȝte so Pieres the Plowman · peyneth hym to tulye
As wel for a wastour · and wenches of the stuwes,
As for hym-self and his seruauntz · saue he is firste yserued;
And trauailleth and tulyeth · for a tretour also sore
As for a trewe tydy man · al tymes ylyke.

B. 428. pursueth WCOBY; sueth L.

Bote thow lyue by the lore · of *spiritus iusticie*,
The chef seede that Peers sewe · saued worst thow neuere.
Bote Conscience the comune fede · and cardinale vertues,
Leyf hit wel, we beon lost · bothe lyf and soule.'
'Then is meny man ylost' · quath a lewede vicory;
'Ich am a curatoure of holykirke · and cam neuere in my tyme
Man to me, that couthe telle · of cardinale uertues,
Other that acountede Conscience · a cockes fether other an hennes!
Ich knew neuere cardinal · that he ne cam fro the pope,
And we clerkes, when thei cometh · for here comunes payeth,
For here pelure and palfrayes mete · and pylours that hem folwen.
The comune *clamat cotidie* · eche man to othere,
'The countrey is the corsedour · ther cardinales cometh ynne;
And ther thei liggen and lengen most · lecherie ther regneth:'—
For-thi,' quath this vicory · 'by verrai god, ich wolde
That no cardinal come · a-mong the comune peuple,
Bote in here holinesse · holden hem stille
At Auenoun, a-mong Iuwes · *cum sancto sanctus eris, etc.*,
Other in Rome, as here ruwele wolde · the relikes to kepe;
And thow, Conscience, in kynges court · and sholdest neuere come thennes,
And Grace, that thou so gredest of · were gyour of alle clerkes,
And Peers with hus newe plouh · and his olde bothe
Emperour of alle the worlde · that alle men were Crystyne!
Imparfit is the pope · that al the peuple sholde helpe,
And soudeth hem that sleeth · suche as he sholde saue;
Ac wel worthe Peers Plouhman · that porsueth god in doynge,
Qui pluit super iustos · et iniustos at ones,
And sent the sonne to saue · a corsed mannes tulthe,
As bryght as to the beste man · other to the beste womman.
Ryght so Peers Plouhman · peyneth hym to tulye
As wel for a wastour · other for a wenche atte stuwes,
As for hym-self and his seruauns · saue he is furst yserued;
So blessed beo Peers Plouhman · that peyneth hym to tulie,
And trauaileth and tuleth · for a tretour al-so sore
As for a trewe tydy man · alle tymes ylyke.

C. 412. kirke T; churche PEFSG. 420. liggyn P. 421. þeis (*for* þis) P. 423. holden EFG; heolden P. 426. come TG; go PEMFS. 441. triwe P. lyke P; y-liche STG; i-liche MF; *read* ylyke.

And worshiped be he that wrouȝte al · bothe good and wykke,
And suffreth that synful be · til some tyme that thei repente.
And god amende the pope · that pileth holykirke,
And cleymeth bifor the kynge · to be keper ouer Crystene,
And counteth nouȝt though Crystene · ben culled and robbed,
And fynt folke to fyȝte · and Cristene blode to spille,
Aȝeyne the olde lawe and newe lawe · as Luke ther-of witnesseth,
Non occides: michi vindictam, etc.
It semeth, by so · hym-self hadde his wille,
That he ne reccheth riȝte nouȝte · of al the remenaunte.
And Cryst of his curteisye · the cardinales saue,
And tourne her witte to wisdome · and to wele of soule!
For the comune,' quod this curatour · 'counten ful litel
The conseille of Conscience · or cardinale vertues,
But if thei seiȝe as by syȝte · somwhat to wynnynge;
Of gyle ne of gabbynge · gyue thei neuere tale.
For *spiritus prudencie* · amonge the peple, is gyle,
And alle tho faire vertues · as vyces thei semeth;
Eche man sotileth a sleight · synne forto hyde,
And coloureth it for a kunnynge · and a clene lyuynge.'
Thanne lough there a lorde · and 'by this liȝte,' sayde,
'I halde it ryȝte and resoun · of my reue to take
Al that myne auditour · or elles my stuwarde
Conseilleth me by her acounte · and my clerkes wrytynge.
With *spiritus intellectus* · they seke the reues rolles,
And with *spiritus fortitudinis* · fecche it I wole.'
And thanne come there a kynge · and bi his croune seyde,
'I am kynge with croune · the comune to reule,
And holykirke and clergye · fro cursed men to defende.
And if me lakketh to lyue by · the lawe wil I take it,
There I may hastlokest it haue · for I am hed of lawe;
For ȝe ben but membres · and I aboue alle.
And sith I am ȝowre aller hed · I am ȝowre aller hele,
And holycherche chief help · and chiftaigne of the comune.
And what I take of ȝow two · I take it atte techynge

B. 444. hadd L. 450. seiȝe W; seigh C; seen O; sowe L. 456. lough L. 461. it WCOBY; L *om.*

And worsheped be he that wrouhte al · bothe good and wykke,
And suffreth hem that synful beon · til tyme that thei repenten.
And god amende the pope · that pileth holichurche,
And cleymeth by-fore the kyng · to beo kepere ouere Cristyne,
And counteth noȝt thauh Cristene men · be culled and robbed,
And fyndeth folke to fighte · and Cristene blod to spille,
Aȝeyn the lawe bothe old and newe · as Luk bereth wittnesse,
Non occides: et alibi, Michi uindictam, et ego retribuam.
Sikerliche hit semeth, by so · hym-self hadde hus wil,
That he reccheth right nouht · of al the other remenaunt.
And Crist of hus cortesye · the cardinales saue,
And turne here wit to wisedom · and welthe for the soule!
For the comune,' quath this curatour · 'counten ful litel
The consail of Conscience · other cardinale uertues,
Bote hit soune as by syght · som what to wynnynge;
Of gile ne of gabbynge · gyueth thei neuere tale.
For *spiritus prudencie* · among the peuple, is gyle,
And tho faire vertues · as vices thei hem semeth;
Eche man soteleth a sleithe · synne for to huyde,
And coloreth hit for a connynge · and a clene lyuynge.'
Then louh ther a lorde · and 'by this light!' seide,
'Ich halde hit right and reson · to take of my reeue
Al that myn auditour · other elles my stiwarde
Conseileth me by here a-counte · and my clerkes wrytynge.
With *spiritus intellectus* · thei toke the reeue-rolles,
And with *spiritus fortitudinis* · fecche hit, wol he, nul he.'
Then cam ther a kynge · and by hus corone seide,
'Ich am a kyng with corone · the comune to reule,
And holychurch and clergie · fro corsede men to defenden.
And yf me lacketh to lyue by · the lawe wol that ich take
Ther ich may haue hit hastelokest · for ich am hefd of lawe,
And ȝe ben bote membrys · and ich a-boue alle.
Sitthen ich am ȝoure alre hefd · ich am ȝoure alre hele,
And holychurches chef help · and chefteyn of the comune.
And what ich take of ȝow two · ich take hit at techynge

C. 442. he MFSGT; PE *om.* 443. suffreþ EMFGS; suffren P. 448. nywe P. *Et alibi* FS; PEMTG *om.* *et—retribuam* ST; PEMFG *om.* 450. he MSG; hym PEF. reccheþ MSFG; rekeþ PE. 453. þes (*for* þis) P. 458. hem EMF; hym P. 459. a EMFSGT; P *om.* for MF; PESGT *om.*

Of *spiritus iusticie* · for I iugge 3ow alle;
So I may baldely be houseled · for I borwe neuere,
Ne craue of my comune · but as my kynde asketh.'
'In condicioun,' quod Conscience · 'that thow konne defende
And rule thi rewme in resoun · ri3t wel, and in treuth,
Take thow may in resoun · as thi lawe asketh;
Omnia tua sunt ad defendendum, set non ad depredandum!'
The vyker hadde fer home · and faire toke his leue,
And I awakned there-with · and wrote as me mette.

PASSUS XX.

Passus xx^us^ de visione, et primus de Dobest.

THANNE as I went by the way · whan I was thus awaked,
Heuy-chered I 3ede · and elynge in herte;
I ne wiste where to ete · ne at what place.
And it neighed nyeghe the none · and with Nede I mette,
That afronted me foule · and faitour me called.

'Coudestow nou3te excuse the · as dede the kynge and other,
That thow toke to thi bylyf · to clothes and to sustenance,
As by techynge and by tellynge · of *spiritus temperancie*,
And thow nome namore · than Nede the tau3te,
And Nede ne hath no lawe · ne neure shal falle in dette?
For thre thynges he taketh · his lyf forto saue,
That is, mete, whan men hym werneth · and he no moneye weldeth,
Ne wyght none wil ben his borwe · ne wedde hath none to legge.
And he cau3te in that cas · and come there-to by sleighte,
He synneth nou3te sothelich · that so wynneth his fode.
And though he come so to a clothe · and can no better cheuysaunce,

Of *spiritus iusticie* · for ich Iugge ȝou alle;
So ich may baldely beo housled · for ich borwe neuere,
Ne craue of my comune · bote as my kynde asketh.'
'In condicion,' quath Conscience · 'that thou conne defende
And reule thy reame in reson · right wel, and in treuthe;
Than, that thow haue thyn askyng · as the lawe asketh;
Omnia sunt tua ad defendendum, sed non ad deprehendendum!'
The vicory hadde fer hom · and faire tok hus leue,
And ich a-wakede ther-with · and wrot as me mette.

Hic explicit passus primus de Dobest.

PASSUS XXIII.

Hic incipit passus secundus de Dobest.

AND as ich wente by the waye · when ich was thus awaked,
Heuy-chered ich ȝeode · and elynge in heorte;
For ich ne wiste wher to ete · ne in what place.
And hit neyhede ny the noon · and with Neode ich mette,
That afrontede me foule · and faitour me calde.
'Couthest thou nat excuse the,' he seide · 'as dude the kyng and othere,
That thou toke to lyue by · to sustinaunce and clothes,
As by techinge and tellynge · of *spiritus temperancie*,
And that thow nome no more · than Neode the tauhte?
Neode hath no lawe · ne neuere shal falle in dette
For thre thynges that he taketh · hus lyf for to saue;
That is, mete, whanne men hym werneth · for he no monye weldeth,
And wot that non wol be hus borgh · nother hath wed to legge.
And he cacche in that cas · and come ther-to by sleithe,
Sotheliche he syneweth nat · that so wynneth hus fode.
And thauh he come so to a cloth · and can no betere cheuesaunce,

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C. 476. Iugge MFST; Iuge PG. 477. houslede P. 480 P *om.* 2*nd* in. 482. vickery P; *see* l. 411. 483. mette EMSGT; mete P.
Passus XXIII. 1. awakede P. 2. chered EMFG; chired P. 4. 'hit SM; it FT; PEG *om.* 12. werneþ EMFSGT; wyrneþ P. 16. P *om.* a.

Nede anon riȝte · nymeth hym vnder meynpryse.
And if hym lyst for to lape · the lawe of kynde wolde
That he dronke at eche diche · ar he for thurste deyde.
So Nede, at grete nede · may nymen as for his owne,
Wyth-oute conseille of Conscience · or cardynale vertues,
So that he suwe and saue · *spiritus temperancie.*
For is no vertue by fer · to *spiritus temperancie,*
Neither *spiritus iusticie* · ne *spiritus fortitudinis.*
For *spiritus fortitudinis* · forfaiteth ful oft,
He shal do more than mesure · many tyme and ofte,
And bete men ouer bitter · and somme of hem to litel,
And greue men gretter · than goode faith it wolde.
And *spiritus iusticie* · shal iuggen, wolhe, nolhe,
After the kynges conseille · and the comune lyke.
And *spiritus prudencie* · in many a poynte shal faille
Of that he weneth wolde falle · if his wytte ne were.
Wenynge is no wysdome · ne wyse ymagynacioun,
Homo proponit et deus disponit · and gouerneth alle good vertues.
Ac Nede is next hym · for anon he meketh,
And as low as a lombe · for lakkyng of that hym nedeth.

Wyse men forsoke wele · for they wolde be nedy,
And woneden in wildernesse · and wolde nouȝte be riche.
And god al his grete Ioye · gostliche he left,
And cam and toke mankynde · and bycam nedy.
So nedy he was, as seyth the boke · in many sondry places,
That he seyde in his sorwe · on the selue rode,
"Bothe fox and foule · may fleighe to hole and crepe,
And the fisshe hath fyn · to flete with to reste,
There nede hath ynome me · that I mote nede abyde,
And suffre sorwes ful sowre · that shal to Ioye tourne."
For-thi be nouȝte abasshed · to bydde and to be nedy;
Syth he that wrouȝte al the worlde · was wilfullich nedy,
Ne neuer none so nedy · ne pouerere deyde.'

Whan Nede had vndernome me thus · anon I felle aslepe,

B. 47. byde L; bidde RCOB.

Neode nymeth hym a-non · vnder hus mayn-pryse.
And ȝif hym lust for to lape · the lawe of kynde wolde
That he dronk of eche a diche · er he deide for therste.
So Neode at grete neode · may nyme as for hus owene,
With-oute consail of Conscience · or cardinale uertues,
So that he suwe and saue · *spiritus temperancie.*
For is no vertue by-fore · to *spiritus temperancie,*
Nother *spiritus iusticie* · ne *spiritus fortitudinis.*
For *spiritus fortitudinis* · forfeteth ful ofte,
He shal do more than mesure · meny tyme and ofte,
And bete men ouere bittere · and som body to lyte,
And greue men grettour · than good faith wolde.
And *spiritus iusticie* · shal Iugen, wol he, nul he,
After the kynges counsaile · and the comune lyke.
And *spiritus prudencie* · in menye poynt shal fayle
Of that he weneth wolde falle · yf his wit ne were.
Wenynge is no wisedome · ne wys ymaginacion,
Homo proponit, deus disponit · god gouerneth alle goode vertues.
Next hym is Neode · for a-non he meoketh,
And is as louh as a lomb · for lackynge of that hym neodeth;
For Neode maketh neody · for neode louh-herted.
Filosofres for-soken welthe · for thei wolde be neody,
And wonede wel elyngliche · and wolden nat be riche.
And god al hus grete ioye · gostliche he lefte,
And cam and took man-kynde · and by-cam ful neody.
He was so neody, seith the bok · in meny sondry places,
That he seide in hus sorwe · on the selue rode,
"Bothe fox and fowel · may fleo to hole and crepe,
And the fisshe hath fynnes · to flete with to reste,
Ther Neode hath ynome me so · that ich mot neode abyde,
And suffre sorwes soure · that shal to ioye turne."
For-thi beo nat a-basshed · to bydde and to beo neody,
Sithe he that wrouhte al the worlde · was wilfulliche neody;
Neuere non so neody · ne non so poure deyede.'
When Neode hadde vnder-nome me thus · a-non ich fel a-sleope,

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C. 18. ȝif F; ȝeueþ (*wrongly*) PE. 27. bete EFST; beten M; bote P. 34. The MSS. *erroneously place the words* good vertues *at the beginning of* l. 35. 36. þat hym GMFT; hym þat PES (*wrongly*). 46. abyde S; abide MFT; byde PE. 48. abaihsshed P. 51. feol (*for* fel) P.

And mette ful merueillously · that, in mannes forme,
Antecryst cam thanne · and al the croppe of treuthe
Torned it vp so doune · and ouertilte the rote,
And made fals sprynge and sprede · and spede mennes nedes;
In eche a contre there he cam · he cutte awey treuthe,
And gert gyle growe there · as he a god were.
Freres folwed that fende · for he ȝaf hem copes,
And religiouse reuerenced hym · and rongen here belles,
And al the couent forth cam · to welcome that tyraunt,
And alle hise, as wel as hym · saue onlich folis;
Which folis were wel leuer · to deye than to lyue
Lenger, sith leute · was so rebuked.
And a fals fende Antecriste · ouer alle folke regned;
And that were mylde men and holy · that no myschief dredden,
Defyed al falsenesse · and folke that it vsed;
And what kynge that hem conforted · knowynge hem any while,
They cursed, and her conseille · were it clerke or lewed.
Antecriste hadde thus sone · hundredes at his banere,
And Pryde it bare · boldely aboute,
With a lorde that lyueth · after lykynge of body,
That cam aȝein Conscience · that kepere was and gyoure
Ouer kynde Crystene · and cardynale vertues.
'I conseille,' quod Conscience tho · 'cometh with me, ȝe foles,
In-to Vnyte holy-cherche · and holde we vs there,
And crye we to Kynde · that he come and defende vs,
Foles, fro this fendes lymes · for Piers loue the Plowman.
And crye we to alle the comune · that thei come to Vnite,
And there abide and bikere · aȝein Beliales children.'
Kynd Conscience tho herde · and cam out of the planetes,
And sent forth his foreioures · feures and fluxes,
Coughes, and cardiacles · crampes, and tothaches,
Rewmes, and radegoundes · and roynouse scalles,
Byles, and bocches · and brennyng agues;
Frenesyes, and foule yueles · forageres of kynde,
Hadde yprykked and prayed · polles of peple,

B. 54. made R; LWCOB *om.* 62. Lenger WCOB; Lengore L. leute RB; lenten LWCO.

And mette ful merueilousliche · that, in a mannes forme,
Antecrist cam thenne · and al the crop of treuthe
Turned tyte vp-so-doun · and ouer-tilte the rote,
And made fals to springe and sprede · and spede menne neodes;
In eche contreie ther he cam · he cutte away treuthe,
And gert gyle growe ther · as he a god were.
Freres folweden that feonde · for he ȝaf hem copes,
And religiouse reuerencede hym · and rongen here belles;
Al the couent tho cam · to welcome that tyraunt,
And alle hise, as wel as hym · saue onliche fooles;
The whiche fooles weren · gladdere to deye
Than lyue lengoure, suthe leaute · was so rebuked.
And a fals feond Anticrist · ouer alle folke regnede,
That were mylde men and holye · that no meschief dradden,
Defieden al falsnesse · and folk that hit vsede;
And what kyng comfortede hem · knowynge here gyle,
Thei corsede, and here consail · were hit clerk other lewede.

Anticrist thus sone hadde · hundredes at hus baner,
And Pruyde bar that baner · boldeliche aboute,
With a lorde that lyueth · after lykynge of hus body,
And cam a-ȝeyns Conscience · that keper was an gyour
Ouer kynde Cristyne · and cardinale uertues.
'Ich consail,' quath Conscience tho · 'cometh with me, ȝe fooles,
In-to Unite holichurche · and halde we ous there.
And crye we to Kynde · that he come and defende
Ous fooles fro the feondes lymes · for Peers loue the Plouhman.
And crye we on al the comune · that thei come to Unite,
Ther to abyde and bykere · aȝeyns Beliales children.'

Kynde huyrde tho Conscience · and cam out of the planetes,
And sente forth his foreyours · feuers and fluxes,
Couhes, and cardiacles · crampes, and toth-aches,
Reumes, and radegoundes · and roynouse scabbes,
Bules, and bocches · and brennyng aguwes;
Frenesyes, and foule vueles · these foragers of kynde,
Hadden pryked and preyed · polles of people;

C. 54. tilte MFT; tilt P. 55. spede MFST; spedde PE. 58. he EMFST; ȝe P. ȝaf EST; ȝaue P. 60. couant P. wolcome P. þat MFST; þe PE. 64. feon P; fend MT. 70. abouhte P. 81. foreyours EF; fereours (*for* foreours) P. 82. crampes MIF; claumpes PE. 86. prykede P.

That largelich a legioun · lese her lyf sone.
There was—'harrow and help! · here cometh Kynde,
With Deth that is dredful · to vndone vs alle!'
The lorde that lyued after lust · tho alowde cryde
After Conforte, a knyghte · to come and bere his banere.
'Al-arme! alarme!' quod that lorde · 'eche lyf kepe his owne!'
And thanne mette this men · ar mynstralles myȝte pipe,
And ar heraudes of armes · hadden descreued lordes.
Elde the hore · he was in the vauntwarde,
And bare the banere bifor Deth · by riȝte he it claymed.
Kynde come after · with many kene sores,
As pokkes and pestilences · and moche poeple shente;
So Kynde thorw corupciouns · kulled ful manye.
Deth cam dryuende after · and al to doust passhed
Kynges and knyȝtes · kayseres and popes;
Lered ne lewed · he let no man stonde,
That he hitte euene · that euere stired after.
Many a louely lady · and lemmanes of knyghtes
Swouned and swelted · for sorwe of Dethes dyntes.
Conscience of his curteisye · to Kynde he bisouȝte
To cesse and suffre · and see where thei wolde
Leue Pryde pryuely · and be parfite Cristene.
And Kynde cessed tho · to se the peple amende.
Fortune gan flateren thenne · tho fewe that were alyue,
And byhight hem longe lyf · and Lecherye he sent
Amonges al manere men · wedded and vnwedded,
And gadered a gret hoste · al agayne Conscience.
This Lecherye leyde on · with a laughyng chiere,
And with pryue speche · and peynted wordes,
And armed hym in ydelnesse · and in hiegh berynge.
He bare a bowe in his hande · and manye blody arwes,
Weren fethered with faire biheste · and many a false truthe.
With his vntydy tales · he tened ful ofte
Conscience and his compaignye · of holicherche the techeres.
Thanne cam Coueityse · and caste how he myȝte

B. 118. Wit L.

Largeliche a legion · lees the lyf sone.
Ther was—'harow and help! · her cometh Kynde,
With Deth that is dredful · to vn-do ous alle!'
The lord that lyuede after lust · tho aloud criede
After Comfort, a knyght · to come and bere hus baner.
'Alarme! alarme!' quath that lorde · 'eche lyf kepe hus owene!'
Thenne mette these men · er mynstrales myghte pipe,
And er heraudes of armes · hadden discriued lordes.
Elde the hore · was in the vaunt-warde,
And bar the baner by-fore Deth · by right he hit claymede.
Kynde cam after hym · with menye kynne sores,
As pockes and pestilences · and muche people shente;
So Kynde thorgh corupcions · culde ful menye.
Deth cam dryuyng after · and al to douste paschte
Kynges and knyghtes · caysers and popes;
Lered ne lewide · he lefte no man stande;
That he hitte euene · sterede neuere after.
Many a louely lady · and here lemmanes knyghtes
Sounede and swelte · for sorwe of Dethes dyntes.
Conscience of hus cortesie · tho Kynde he by-souhte
To cessen and to suffren · and seo wher thei wolde
Leue pruyde pryueliche · and beo parfit Cristene.
And Kynde cessede tho · to seon the peuple amende.
Fortune gan flaterie thenne · thaym fewe that were a-lyue,
And by-hyght hem long lyf · and Lecherie he sente
Amonges alle manere men · wedded and vnwedded,
And gaderede a gret ost · al ageyn Conscience.
This Lecherie leyde on · with lauhynge chere,
And with pryuey speche · and peyntede wordes,
And armede hym in ydelnesse · and in hy beryng.
He bar a bowe in hus honde · and manye brode arwes,
Were fetherede with faire by-heste · and many a fals treuthe.
With vntidy tales · he teonede ful ofte
Conscience and hus companye · of holy churche the techers.
Thenne cam Couetise · and caste how he myghte

C. 90. loust P. 94. discriuede P. 96. þe MFST; a PE. 100. dryuyng EMFS; dremend P. paschte FS; passhte T; paihste P. 104. louely EMFST; lofly P. 105. dyþes P. 111. hem MFST; hym PE. 112. vnweddede P. 114. leyde MFST; leyden PE. chere MFST; chire P. 116. in (1) EMFST; with P; *see* l. 123. 118. Where. 119. Whit P.

Ouercome Conscience · and cardynal vertues,
And armed hym in auaryce · and hungriliche lyued.
His wepne was al wiles · to wynnen and to hyden;
With glosynges and with gabbynges · he gyled the peple.
Symonye hym sente · to assaille Conscience,
And preched to the peple · and prelates thei hem maden,
To holden with Antecryste · her temperaltes to saue;
And come to the kynges conseille · as a kene baroun,
And kneled to Conscience · in courte afor hem alle,
And gart Gode-Feith flee · and Fals to abide,
And boldeliche bar adown · with many a briȝte noble
Moche of the witte and wisdome · of Westmynster halle.
He Iugged til a Iustice · and Iusted in his ere,
And ouertilte al his treuthe · with 'take-this-vp-amendement.'
And to the arches in haste · he ȝede anone after,
And torned ciuile in-to symonye · and sitthe he toke the official;
For a mantel of menyuere · he made lele matrimonye
Departen ar deth cam · and deuors shupte.
'Allas!' quod Conscience, and cried tho · 'wolde Criste, of his grace,
That Coueityse were Cristene · that is so kene a fiȝter,
And bolde and bidyng · while his bagge lasteth!'
And thanne lowgh Lyf · and leet dagge his clothes,
And armed hym in haste · in harlotes wordes,
And helde Holynesse a Iape · and Hendenesse a wastour,
And lete Leute a cherle · and Lyer a fre man;
Conscience and conseille · he counted it a folye.
Thus relyed Lyf · for a litèl fortune,
And pryked forth with Pryde · preyseth he no vertue,
Ne careth nouȝte how Kynde slow · and shal come atte laste,
And culle alle erthely creatures · saue Conscience one.
Lyf leep asyde · and lauȝte hym a lemman,
'Heel and I,' quod he · 'and hieghnesse of herte
Shal do the nouȝte drede · noyther Deth ne Elde,
And to forȝete sorwe · and ȝyue nouȝte of synne.'
This lyked Lyf · and his lemman Fortune,

B. 125. sent L. 137. mentel L. 138. deuors W; diuorce COB; deuos L. 149. Ne WR; He CO; A (*sic*) L. 150. creature L.

Ouercome Conscience · and cardinale uertues,
And armed hym in auarice · and hungriliche lyuede.
Hus wepne was al wiles · to wynne and to huyden;
With glosynges and with gabbyngs · he gylede the peuple.
Symonye hym sewede · to assaile Conscience,
And pressede on the pope · and prelates thei maden,
To holde with Antecrist · here temporalite to saue;
And cam to kynges consail · as a kene baroun,
And knockede Conscience · in court by-fore hem alle,
And gerte Goode-Faith to flee · and Fals to a-byde,
And baldeliche bar adoun · with meny a bryght noble
Muche of the wit and wisdom · of Westmynster halle.
He Iogged til a Iustice · and Iousted in hus ere,
And ouertulte al hus treuthe · with 'tak-this-on-amendement.'
And to the arches in haste · he hyede a-non after,
And turnede cyuyle in-to symonye · and suth he tok the official;
And for a menyuer mantel · he made leel matrimonye
Departe er deth come · and a deuors shupte.
'Alas!' quath Conscience, and cride · 'wolde Crist, of hus grace,
That Couetise were Cristyne · that is so kene to fyghte,
And bold and abydynge · the while hus bagge lasteth!'
And thanne lowh loude Lyf · and let dagge hus clothes,
And armyd hym in haste · in harlotes wordes,
And held Holynesse a Iape · and Hendynesse a wastour,
And let Leaute a cherl · and Lyere a freo man;
Conscience and consail · he countede hit a folye.
Thus relyede Lyf · for a litel fortune,
And pryketh forth with Pruyde · preyseth he no vertue,
Ne careth nouht hou Kynde slouh · and shal come atte laste,
And culle alle erthly creatures · saue Conscience one.
Lyf tho leep asyde · and lauhte hym a lemman,
'Hele and ich,' quath he · 'and hihnesse of herte
Shal do the nat drede · neither Deth ne Elde,
And to for-ȝete ȝouthe · and ȝyue nauht of synne.'
This likede Lyf · and Fortune hus lemman,

C. 125. Whith P. gabbyinges P. gylede S; gilide T; giled EF; gyleþ P. 126. sewede MFT; sywede P. 142. abydynge FS; byddynge P. þe MEF; þy P. 143. lohw (*for* lowh) P. 146. chierl P. 147. hit a S; it a F; hit ME; P *om.* 151. erthyly P. 155. to MFST; PE *om.* forȝute P.

And geten in her glorie · a gadelyng atte laste,
One that moche wo wrouȝte · Sleuthe was his name.
Sleuthe wex wonder ȝerne · and sone was of age,
And wedded one Wanhope · a wenche of the stuwes;
Her syre was a sysour · that neure swore treuthe,
One Thomme Two-tonge · ateynte at vch a queste.
This Sleuthe was war of werre · and a slynge made,
And threwe drede of dyspayre · a dozein myle aboute.
For care Conscience tho · cryed vpon Elde,
And bad hym fonde to fyȝte · and afere Wanhope.
And Elde hent good hope · and hastilich he shifte hym,
And wayued awey Wanhope · and with Lyf he fyȝteth.
And Lyf fleigh for fere · to Fysyke after helpe,
And bisouȝte hym of socoure · and of his salue hadde,
And gaf hym golde, good woon · that gladded his herte,
And thei gyuen hym agayne · a glasen houve.
Lyf leued that lechecrafte · lette shulde Elde,
And dryuen awey Deth · with dyas and dragges.
And Elde auntred hym on Lyf · and atte laste he hitte
A fisicien with a forred hood · that he fel in a palsye,
And there deyed that doctour · ar thre dayes after.
'Now I see,' seyde Lyf · 'that surgerye ne fisyke
May nouȝte a myte auaille · to medle aȝein Elde.'
And in hope of his hele · gode herte he hente,
And rode so to Reuel · a ryche place and a merye;
The companye of conforte · men cleped it sumtyme.
And Elde anone after me · and ouer myne heed ȝede,
And made me balled bifore · and bare on the croune,
So harde he ȝede ouer myn hed · it wil be seen eure.
'Sire euel-ytauȝte Elde,' quod I · 'vnhende go with the!
Sith whanne was the way · ouer mennes hedes?
Haddestow be hende,' quod I · 'thow woldest haue asked leue!'
'ȝe! leue lordeyne!' quod he · and leyde on me with age,
And hitte me vnder the ere · vnethe may ich here;

B. 186. mennes WCROB; men L; *see* l. 286.

And geten in here glorie · a gadelyng atte laste,
On that muche wo wrouhte · Sleuthe was hus name.
Sleuthe wax wonder ȝerne · and sone was of age,
And wedded on Wanhope · a wenche of the stewes;
Here syre was a sysour · that neuere swor treuthe,
On Tomme Two-tounged · ateynt at eche enqueste.
This Sleuthe was sleyh of werre · and a slynge made,
And threw drede of dispayr · a doseyne myle a-boute.
For care Conscience tho · cryede vp-on Elde,
And bad hym fonde to fighte · and afere Wanhope.
And Elde hente good hope · and hastiliche shrof hym,
And wayueth away Wanhope · and with Lyf he fighteth.
And Lif fleyh for fere · to Fisik after helpe,
And by-souhte hym of socour · and of his salue hadde,
And gaf hym gold, good won · that gladede here hertes,
And thei gauen hym agayn · a glasene houe.
Lyf leyuede that leche-craft · lette sholde Elde,
And to-dryue away Deth · with dyas and drogges.
Elde auntrec' hym on Lyf · and atte laste he hitte
A fisician with a forrede hod · that he fel in a palsye,
And ther deiede that doctour · er thre dayes after.
'Now ich seo,' saide Lyf · 'that surgerye ne phisike
May nat a myte availle · to medlen a-ȝens Elde.'
And in hope of hus hele · good heorte he hente,
And rod so to Reuel · a ryche place and a murye;
The companye of comfort · men cleped hit som tyme.
And Elde hastede after hym · and ouer my hefde ȝeode,
And made me balled by-fore · and bar on the croune;
So harde he ȝeode ouer myn hefde · hit wol be sene euere.
'Syre vuel-ytauht Elde,' quath ich · 'vnhende go with the!
Suththe whanne was the hey wey · ouer menne hefdes?
Haddest thow be hende,' quath ich · 'thow woldest haue asked leue!'
'ȝe! leue lordeyn!' quath he · and leyde on me with age,
And hitte me vnder the ere · vnnethe may ich huyre.

C. 160. stywes P. 162. tomme MFS; Robert P. 163. Thes (*for* This) P. 164. þrewe P. 165. þo MFT; PES *om.* 169. fleyht (*for* fleyh) P. fisik EMST; syke (*sic*) P. 170. his MFST; here PE. 171. goud P. 172. gauyn P. 174. dyas and FS; dias and M; *miswritten* dayes P. 182. clipid P. 184. ballide PT. 185. sene EMFST; syne P. 186. ytauhte P. 190. vnnyþe P.

He buffeted me aboute the mouthe · and bette out my tethe,

And gyued me in goutes · I may nou3te go at large.
And of the wo that I was in · my wyf had reuthe,
And wisshed ful witterly · that I were in heuene.
For the lyme that she loued me fore · and leef was to fele,
On ny3tes namely · whan we naked were,
I ne myght in no manere · maken it at hir wille,
So Elde and she sothly · hadden it forbeten.
And as I seet in this sorwe · I say how Kynde passed,
And Deth drowgh niegh me · for drede gan I quake,
And cried to Kynde · out of care me brynge.
'Loo! Elde the hoore ·· hath me biseye,
Awreke me, if 3owre wille be · for I wolde ben hennes.'
'3if thow wilt ben ywroken · wende in-to Vnite,
And holde the there eure · tyl I sende for the,
And loke thow conne somme crafte · ar thow come thennes.'
'Conseille me, Kynde,' quod I · 'what crafte is best to lerne?'

'Lerne to loue,' quod Kynde · 'and leue of alle othre.'
'How shal I come to catel so · to clothe me and to fede?'
'And thow loue lelly,' quod he · 'lakke shal the neure
Mete ne worldly wede · whil thi lyf lasteth.'
And there, by conseille of Kynde · I comsed to rowme
Thorw Contricioun and Confessioun · tyl I cam to Vnite;
And there was Conscience constable · Cristene to saue,
And biseged sothly · with seuene grete gyauntz,
That with Antecrist helden · hard a3ein Conscience.
Sleuth with his slynge · an hard saut he made,
Proude prestes come with hym · moo than a thousand,
In paltokes and pyked shoes · and pisseres longe knyues,
Comen a3ein Conscience; · with Coueityse thei helden.
'By Marie,' quod a mansed preste · of the marche of Yrlonde,

'I counte namore Conscience · bi so I cacche syluer,
Than I do to drynke · a drau3te of good ale!'

B. 210. wordly L.

He boffatede me a-boute the mouthe · and bete oute my wangteth,
And gyuede me with goutes · ich may nat go at large.
And of the wo that ich was yn · my wif hadde reuthe,
And wisshede wel witerlyche · that ich were in heuene.
For the lyme that she louede me for · and leef was to feele,
And a nyghtes nameliche · when we naked were,
Ich ne myghte in none manere · maken hit at heore wille,
So Elde and hue hit hadde · a-feynted and forbete.
And as ich sat in this sorwe · ich sauh how Kynde passede,
And Deth drow neyghynge me · for drede gan ich quaken,
And criede carfully to Kynde · out of kare me brynge.
'Lo, hou Elde the hore · hath me byseye;
Awreke me, yf ȝoure wil beo · for ich wolde be hennes.'
'Yf thow wolt beo awreke · wende in-to Unite,
And hold the thare euere · til ich sende for the,
And loke thou conne som craft · er thou come thennes.'
'Consaileth me, Kynde,' quath ich · 'what crafte be best to leere?'
'Lerne to loue,' quath Kynde · 'and lef alle other thynges.'
'Hou shal ich come to catel so · to clothe me and to feode?'
'And thow loue leelliche · lacke shal the neuere
Wede ne worldlich mete · while thy lyf lasteth.'
And ich thorgh consail of Kynde · comsede to rome
Thorgh Contricion and Confession · til ich cam to Unite;
And ther was Conscience constable · Crystine to saue.
He was byseged sothliche · with seuene grete geauntes,
That with Antecrist helden · harde aȝeyns Conscience.
Sleuthe with hus slynge · an hard saut he made.
Proude preostes cam with hym · passend an hundred;
In paltokes and pikede shoes · and pissares longe knyues,
Thei come aȝeyns Conscience; · with Couetise thei helden.
'By the Marie,' quath a mansed preest · was of the marche of Yrelonde,
'Ich counte Conscience no more · by so ich cacche seluer,
Than ich do to drynke · a drawt of good ale!'

C. 194. whiterlyche P. 195. þat MFS; PE *om.* fore P. 196. nyghȝtes P. 198. hue S; heo MF; he P. a-feyntede P. 199. ich E; y S; i FT; P *om.* 201. P *om.* out. 211. wordliche P. 215. bysegide P. 216. Aunticrist PS. 217. saut EFST; sauht P. 221. mansede P.

And so seide sexty · of the same contreye;
And shoten aȝein with shotte · many a shef of othes;
And brode hoked arwes · goddes herte, and his nayles,
And hadden almost Vnyte · and holynesse adowne.
Conscience cryed, 'helpe · Clergye, or ellis I falle
Thorw inparfit prestes · and prelates of holicherche.'
Freres herden hym crye · and comen hym to helpe,
Ac for thei couth nouȝte wel her craft · Conscience forsoke hem.
Nede neghed tho nere · and Conscience he tolde
That thei come for coueityse · to haue cure of soules—
'And for thei arn poure, par auenture · for patrimoigne hem failleth,
Thei wil flatre, to fare wel · folke that ben riche;
And sithen thei chosen chele · and cheytif pouerte,
Lat hem chewe as thei chese · and charge hem with no cure!
For lomer he lyeth · that lyflode mote begge,
Than he that laboureth for lyflode · and leneth it beggeres.
And sithen freres forsoke · the felicite of erthe,
Lat hem be as beggeres · or lyue by angeles fode!'
Conscience of this conseille tho · comsed forto laughe,
And curteislich conforted hem · and called in alle freres,
And seide, 'sires, sothly · welcome be ȝe alle
To Vnite and holicherche · ac on thyng I ȝow preye,
Holdeth ȝow in Vnyte · and haueth none envye
To lered ne to lewed · but lyueth after ȝowre rewle.
And I wil be ȝowre borghe · ȝe shal haue bred and clothes,
And other necessaries i-nowe · ȝow shal no thyng faille,
With that ȝe leue logyk · and lerneth for to louye.
For loue laft thei lordship · bothe londe and scole,
Frere Fraunceys and Dominyk · for loue to ben holy.
And if ȝe coueyteth cure · Kynde wil ȝow teche,
That in mesure god made · alle manere thynges,
And sette hem at a certeyne · and at a syker noumbre,
And nempned names newe · and noumbred the sterres;
Qui numerat multitudinem stellarum, et omnibus eis nomina [vocat], etc.
Kynges and knyghtes · that kepen and defenden,

B. 235. cheytifte LR; cheitif C; chaytijf O. 242. curteilich L. 248. I-nowe R; I-now C; ynowe WOB; anowe L. 254. hem W; it LCROB. 255. *nomina* CB; LWRO *om.* *vocat* is not in the MSS.

And so seide syxty · of the same countreo;
And shotten aȝeyns hym with shot · many a schef of othes,
And brode-hokede arwes · godes herte, and hus nailes,
And hadde almost Vnite · and holychurche a-doune.
Conscience cride, 'helpe · Cleregie, other ich falle
Thorgh imparfit preestes · and prelates of holychurche.'
Freres herde hym crie · and comen hym to helpe,
Ac for thei couthe nat wel here craft · Conscience for-soke hem.
Neode neyhede tho ner · to Conscience he tolde
That thei came for couetise · to haue cure of soules—
'And for thei aren poure, paraunter · for patrimonye hem failleth,
Thei wolle flaterie to fare wel · to folke that ben riche.
And sitthen thei chosen chile · and chaytif pouerte,
Let hem chewe as thei chosen · and charge hem with no cure!
For lommere he lyeth · that liflode mote begge,
Than he that laboreth for lyflode · and leneth hit beggeres.
And sitthen freres for-soke · the felicite of erthe,
Lat hem be as beggers · other lyue by aungeles fode!'
Conscience of this consail tho · comsede for to lauhe,
And cortesly confortid hem · and cald yn alle freres,
And seide, 'sires, sothly · wel-come be ȝe alle
To Unite and to holichurche · ac o thing ich ȝow preye,
Holdeth ȝow in Unite · and haueth non enuye
To lerede ne to lewide · bote lyueth after ȝoure reule.
And ich wol beo ȝoure borw · ȝe shulleth haue brede and clothes,
And other necessaries ynowh · ȝou shal no thyng lakke,
With that ȝe leue logyk · and lerneth for to louye.
For loue lefte thei lordshupes · bothe londe and scole,
Frere Fraunceis and Domynyk · for loue to be holy.
And yf ȝe coueiteth cure · Kynde wol ȝow telle,
That in mesure god made · alle manere thynges,
And sette hit at a sertayn · and at a syker numbre,
And nempnede hem names · and nombrede the sterres;
Qui numerat multitudinem stellarum.
Kynges and knyghtes · that kepen and defenden,

C. 225. many—of EF; many a schef S; many shef of T; mony shef P. 226. harwes P; *see* l. 117. 236. chaitife M; chaitif T; cheityf S; caytif PE. 250. lernyeþ P. 253. ȝe EMFST; he P. 255. a (1) EMFT; PS *om.*

Han officers vnder hem · and vch of hem certeyne;
And if thei wage men to werre · thei write hem in noumbre,
Or wil no tresorere hem paye · trauaille thei neure so sore.
Alle other in bataille · ben yholde bribours,
Pilours and pykehernois · in eche a place ycursed.
Monkes and monyals · and alle men of religioun
Her ordre and her reule wil · to han a certeyne noumbre.
Of lewed and of lered · the lawe wol and axeth
A certeyn for a certeyne · saue onelich of freres!
For-thi,' quod Conscience, 'by Cryst · kynde witte me telleth,
It is wikked to wage ȝow · ȝe wexeth out of noumbre!
Heuene hath euene noumbre · and helle is with-out noumbre;
For-thi I wolde witterly · that ȝe were in the registre,
And ȝowre noumbre vndre notaries sygne · and noyther mo ne lasse!'
Enuye herd this · and heet freres to go to scole,
And lerne logyk and lawe · and eke contemplacioun,
And preche men of Plato · and preue it by Seneca,
That alle thinges vnder heuene · ouȝte to ben in comune.
And ȝit he lyeth, as I leue · that to the lewed so precheth,
For god made to men a lawe · and Moyses it tauȝte,
Non concupisces rem proximi tui.
And euele is this yholde · in parisches of Engelonde,
For persones and parishprestes · that shulde the peple shryue,
Ben curatoures called · to knowe and to hele,
Alle that ben her parisshiens · penaunce to enioigne,
And shulden be ashamed in her shrifte; · ac shame maketh hem wende,
And fleen to the freres · as fals folke to Westmynstre,
That borweth and bereth it thider · and thanne biddeth frendes
ȝerne of forȝifnesse · or lenger ȝeres lone.
Ac whil he is in Westmynstre · he wil be bifore,
And make hym merye · with other mennes goodis.
And so it fareth with moche folke · that to the freres shryueth,
As sysours and excecutours · thei wil ȝyue the freres

B. 259. LWCROB *omit* Or, *but* Crowley *retains it.* WOB *surmount the difficulty by placing* l. 259 *after* l. 261. 270. notaries WCOB; notarie L. 284. lone O; loone WC; lene (*or* leue?) LR. 288. ȝyue þe WRO; ȝeue þe B; þe (*with* ue *above*) L.

Hauen officers vnder hem · and ech of hem a certayn;
And yf thei wage men to werre · thei wryten hem in numbre;
Wol no treserour take hem wages · trauayle thei neuere so sore,
Bote hij beon nempned in the numbre · of hem that ben ywaged.
Alle othere in bataille · beeth yholde brybours,
Pilours and pyke-herneys · in eche parshe a-corsede.
Monekes and monyales · and alle men of religion,
Here ordre and here ruele wol · to haue a certayn numbre.
Of lered and lewede · the lawe wole and asketh
A certayn for a certayn · saue onliche of freres!
For-thi,' quath Conscience, 'by Crist · kynde wit me telleth,
Hit is wickede to wage ȝou · ȝe wexeth oute of numbre!
Heuene haueth euene numbre · and helle is with-oute numbre;
For-thi ich wolde witerly · that ȝe were in registre,
And ȝoure numbre vnder notarie signe · and nother more ne lasse!'
Enuye herde this · and het freres go to scole,
And lerne logik and lawe · and eke contemplacion,
And preche men of Plato · and prouen hit by Seneca,
That alle thyng vnder heuene · ouhte to beo in comune.
He lyeth, as ich leyue · that to the lewede so precheth,
For god made to men a lawe · and Moyses hit tauhte,
Non concupisces rem proximi tui.
And vuel is this yholde · in parshes of Yngelonde,
For persones and parshe-preestes · that sholde the peuple shryue,
And thei beon curatours cald · to knowe and to hele,
Alle that been here parshenes · penaunces to enioyne,
And beo ashamede in here shryft; · ac shame maketh hem wende,
And fleo to the freres · as fals folke to Westmynstre,
That borweth and bereth hit thuder · and thenne byddeth frendes
ȝeorne of for-ȝeuenesse · other lenger ȝeres leue.
Ac while he is in Westmynstre · he wol be by-fore,
And maken hym myrie · with other menne goodes.
And so hit fareth by muche folke · that to freres hem shryueth,
As asisours and executours · thei shal ȝeue the freres

C. 262. yholde EST; yolde P. 269. wexeþ EFM; wexiþ T; wexit P. 271. whiterly P. 282. to enioyne MFS; enioyne T; enioyneþ P. 284. þe EMST; P *om.* 290. asisours ES; asissours P; sisours MFT. excecutours P.

A parcel to preye for hem · and make hem-self myrye
With the residue and the remenaunt · that other men biswonke,
And suffre the ded in dette · to the day of dome.
Enuye herfore · hated Conscience,
And freres to philosofye · he fonde hem to scole,
The while Coueytise and Vnkyndenesse · Conscience assailled.
In Vnite holycherche · Conscience helde hym,
And made Pees porter · to pynne the ȝates
Of alle taletellers · and tyterers in ydel.
Ypocrisye and he · an hard saut thei made.
Ypocrysie atte ȝate · hard gan fiȝte,
And wounded wel wykkedly · many a wise techer,
That with Conscience acorded · and cardinale vertues.
Conscience called a leche · that coude wel shryue,
'Go salue tho that syke ben · and thorw synne ywounded.'
Shrifte shope sharpe salue · and made men do penaunce
For her mysdedes · that thei wrouȝte hadden,
And that Piers were payed · *redde quod debes.*
Somme lyked nouȝte this leche · and lettres thei sent,
ȝif any surgien were in the sege · that softer couth plastre.
Sire Lief-to-lyue-in-leccherye · lay there and groned;
For fastyng of a Fryday · he ferde as he wolde deye.
'Ther is a surgiene in this sege · that softe can handle,
And more of phisyke bi fer · and fairer he plastreth;
One frere Flaterere · is phisiciene and surgiene.'
Quod Contricioun to Conscience · 'do hym come to Vnyte,
For here is many a man · herte thorw Ypocrisie.'
'We han no nede,' quod Conscience · 'I wote no better leche

Than persoun or parissh-prest · penytancere or bisshop,
Saue Piers the Plowman · that hath powere ouer hem alle,
And indulgence may do · but if dette lette it.
I may wel suffre,' seyde Conscience · 'syn ȝe desiren,
That frere Flaterer be fette · and phisike ȝow syke.'
The frere her-of herde · and hyed faste
To a lorde for a lettre · leue to haue to curen,
As a curatour he were · and cam with his lettres

B. 300. a WRB; LCO *om.* 303. and WR; LCOB *om.* 308. in R; LWCOB *om.*; *see* l. 311. 311. softe WRCOB; soft L.

A parcel to preye for hem · and maken hem murye
With the remenant of the good · that other men byswonke,
And suffre the dede in dette · to the day of dome.
Enuye here-fore · hatyde Conscience,
And freres to philosophie · he fond hem to scole,
The while Couetise and Vnkyndenesse · assailede Conscience.
In Vnite holichurche · Conscience held hym,
And made Pees portor · to pynne the ȝates.
Alle tale-tellours · and titereres in ydel,
Ypocrise and thei · an hard saut· thei ȝeuen.
Ypocrise at the ȝate · harde gan fighte,
And wondede wel wickedly · meny a wys techere,
That with Conscience acordede · and cardinale uertues.
Conscience calde a leche · that couthe wel shryue,
To salue tho that sik were · and thorgh synne y-wonded.
Shruft shupte sharpe salue · and made men do penaunce
For here mysdedes · that thei wrouht hadde,
And that Peers pardoun were ypaied · *redde quod debes.*
Some likede nat this leche · and lettres thei senten,
Yf eny surgeyn were in the sege · that softere couthe plastre.
Sire Lyf-to-lyue-in-lecherie · lay there and gronede;
For fastynge of a Friday · he ferde as he wolde deye.
'Ther is a surgen in the sege · that softe can handle,
And more of fisik by fer · and fairer he plastreth;
On frere Flaterere · is fisician and surgien.'
Quath Contricion to Conscience · 'do hym come to Unite,
For her is meny man · hurt thorgh Ypocrisye.'
'We haue no neode,' quath Conscience · 'ich wote no bettere leche
Than person other parshe-prest · penytancer other busshup,
Saue Peers the Plouhman · that hath powere ouere alle,
And indulgence may do · bote yf dette lette.
Ich may wel suffry,' quath Conscience · 'sutthe ȝe desiren
That frere Flaterere be fet · and fysvke ȝou syke.'
The frere here-of herde · and hyede faste
To a lorde for a lettere · leue to haue to curen
As he a curatour were · and cam with hus letteres

C. 291. prarcel (*sic*) P. murye T; murie M; merye FS; murþe P. 300. and (*for* an) P. saut ST; sawt F; swat (*sic*) PE. 314. fer MFT; feer P. 322. disyren P.

Baldly to the bisshop · and his brief hadde,
In contrees there he come in · confessiouns to here;
And cam there Conscience was · and knokked atte ȝate.
Pees vnpynned it · was porter of Vnyte, ·
And in haste asked · 'what his wille were?'
'In faith,' quod this frere · 'for profit and for helthe
Carpe I wolde with Contricioun · and therfore come I hider.'

'He is sike,' seide Pees · 'and so ar many other,
Ypocrisie hath herte hem · ful harde is if thei keure.'
'I am a surgien,' seide the segge · 'and salues can make;
Conscience knoweth me wel · and what I can do bothe.'
'I preye the,' quod Pees tho · 'ar thow passe ferther,
What hattestow? I preye the · hele nouȝte thi name.'
'Certes,' seyde his felow · 'sire *Penetrans-domos.*'
'ȝe, go thi gate,' quod Pees · 'bi god, for al thi phisyk,
But thow conne somme crafte · thow comest nouȝt her-inne!
I knewe such one ones · nouȝte eighte wynter passed,
Come in thus ycoped · at a courte there I dwelt,
And was my lordes leche · and my ladyes bothe.
And at the last this limitour · tho my lorde was out,
He salued so owre wommen · til somme were with childe!'
Hende-speche het Pees · opene the ȝates—
'Late in the frere and his felawe · and make hem faire chere.
He may se and here · so it may bifalle,
That Lyf thorw his lore · shal leue Coueityse,
And be adradde of Deth · and with-drawe hym fram Pryde,
And acorde with Conscience · and kisse her either other.'
Thus thorw Hende-speche · entred the frere,
And cam in-to Conscience · and curteisly hym grette.
'Thow art welcome,' quod Conscience · 'canstow hele the syke?
Here is Contricioun,' quod Conscience · 'my cosyn, ywounded;
Conforte hym,' quod Conscience · 'and take kepe to his sores.
The plastres of the persoun · and poudres biten to sore,

Baldely to the bushope · and hus breef hadde,
In countreyes ther he cam · confessions to hure;
And cam ther Conscience was · and knockede atte ȝate.
Pees vnpynnede the dore · that was portour of Vnite,
And in hast he askede · 'what hus wil were?'
'In faith,' quath this frere · 'for profit and for helthe,
Carpe ich wolde with Contricion · and ther-fore cam ich hyder.'
'He is syke,' seide Pees · 'and so aren meny othere;
Ypocrisye hath hurt hem · ful hard is yf thei keuere.'
'Ich am a surgen,' seide the frere · 'and salues can ich make,
Conscience knoweth me wel · and what ich can don.'
'Ich preye the,' quath Pees tho · 'er thow passe forthere,
What hattest thow? ich praye the · hele nat thy name.'
'Certes,' seide his felawe · 'syre *Penetrans-domos*.'
'ȝe, go thi gate,' quath Pees · 'by god, for al thy fysike,
Bote thow conne other craft · thou comest nat here-ynne!
Ich knew such on ones · nat eyhte wynter passede,
Cam yn thus y-coped · at a court there ich dwellede.
He was my lordes leche · and my ladies bothe,
And atte last this lymytour · tho my lord was oute,
He saluede so oure wommen · til somme were with childe!'
Hende-speche het Pees tho · opene the ȝates—
'Lat yn the frere and hus felawe · and make hem faire chere.
He may seo and huyre here · so may by-falle,
That Lyf thorgh hus lore · shal leue Couetise,
And to beo a-drad of Deth · and with-drawe hym fro Pruyde,
And acorde with Conscience · and cusse here aither othere.'
Thus thorgh Hende-speche · entrede the frere,
And cam to Conscience · and corteisliche hym grette.
'Thou art welcome,' quath Conscience · 'canst thou hele syke?
Here is Contricion,' quath Conscience · 'my cosyn, ywonded;
Conforte hym,' quath Conscience · 'and take kepe to hus sores.
The plastres of the person · and the pouderes beoth to sore,

C. 331. askede MF; asked E; hesshede P. 335. þei EMFT; þey S; *miswritten* ȝe P. 337. done P. 339. þe EF; PMST *om.* 340. is (*for* his) P. 342. oþer MFS; any oþer E; eny PT. 344. y-copede P. 346. atte þe P. whas P. 347. where P. 349. And lat PE; *but* MFST *omit* And. chere EMFST; chyre P. 356. art MFST; ert PE. wolcome P. 357. ywondede P.

He lat hem ligge ouerlonge · and loth is to chaunge hem;
Fro lenten to lenten · he lat his plastres bite.'
'That is ouerlonge,' quod this limitour · 'I leue I shal amende it;'—
And goth and gropeth Contricioun · and gaf hym a plastre
Of 'a pryue payement · and I shal praye for ȝow,
For alle that ȝe ben holde to · al my lyf-tyme,
And make ȝow, my lady · in masse and in matynes,
As freres of owre fraternite · for a litel syluer.'
Thus he goth and gadereth · and gloseth there he shryueth,
Tyl Contricioun hadde clene forȝeten · to crye and to wepe,
And wake for his wykked werkes · as he was wont to done.
For confort of his confessour · Contricioun he lafte,
That is the souereynest salue · for alkyn synnes.
Sleuth seigh that · and so did Pryde,
And come with a kene wille · Conscience to assaille.
Conscience cryde eft · and bad Clergye help hym,
And also Contricioun · forto kepe the ȝate.
'He lith and dremeth,' seyde Pees · 'and so do many other;
The frere with his phisik · this folke hath enchaunted,
And plastred hem so esyly · thei drede no synne.'
'Bi Cryste,' quod Conscience tho · 'I wil bicome a pilgryme,
And walken as wyde · as al the worlde lasteth,
To seke Piers the Plowman · that Pryde may destruye,
And that freres hadde a fyndyng · that for nede flateren,
And contrepleteth me, Conscience; · now Kynde me auenge,
And sende me happe and hele · til I haue Piers the Plowman!'
And sitthe he gradde after grace · til I gan awake.

Explicit hic dialogus Petri Plowman.

B. 379. wordle L.

And lat hem lygge ouer-lange · and loth is to chaungen;
Fro lente to lente · he let hus plastres byte.'
'That is ouerlonge,' quath this lymytour · 'ich leyue ich shal amende hit.'
He goth and gropeth Contrition · and gaf hym a plastre
Of 'a pryue payement · and ich shal preye for ȝow,
And for hem that ȝe aren holden to · al my lyf-tyme,
And make ȝow, my lady · in masse and in matynes,
As freres of oure fraternite · for a litel seluer.'
Thus he goth and gadereth · and gloseth ther he shryueth,
Til Contrition hadde clene for-ȝute · to crie and wepe and wake
For hus wickede werkes · as he was woned by-fore.
For comfort of hus confessour · Contricion he lefte,
That is the souereyne salue · for alle kynne synnes.
Anon Sleuthe seih that · and so dude Pruyde,
And comen with a kene wil · Conscience to assaile.
Conscience criede eft · 'Cleregie, come help me!'
And bad Contricion to come · to helpe kepe the ȝate.
'He lith adreynt,' saide Pees · 'and so doth meny othere;
The frere with hus fisik · this folke hath enchaunted,
And doth men drynke dwale · that men dredeth no synne.'
'By Crist,' quath Conscience tho · 'ich wol by-come a pilgryme,
And wenden as wide · as the worlde regneth,
To seke Peers the Plouhman · that Pruyde myghte destruye,
And that freres hadden a fyndynge · that for neode flateren,
And counterpleideth me, Conscience; · nowe Kynde me a-venge,
And sende me hap and hele · til ich haue Peers Plouhman!'
And suthe he gradde after grace · til ich gan a-wake.

Hic explicit passus secundus de Dobest.

Explicit Peeres Plouheman.

C. 361. byte T; bite EMF; byde PS. 362. lymytour EFT; lymatour P. 363. and (1) EFS; PMT *om.* 364. ȝowe P. 370. wonede P. 376. kepe EMST; P *om.* 377. adreynt EMF; adreynched P. 378. enchauntede P. 381. wordle P. 383. þat (1) EMFST; þe P.

RICHARD THE REDELESS.

Prologus.

AND as I passid in my preiere · ther prestis were at messe,
In a blessid borugh · that Bristow is named,
In a temple of the trinite · the toune euen amyddis,
That Cristis chirche iȝ cleped · amonge the comune peple,
Sodeynly ther sourdid · selcouthe thingis,
A grett wondir to wyse men · as it well myȝth,
And dowtes ffor to deme · ffor drede comynge after.
So sore were the sawis · of bothe two sidis,
Of Richard that regned · so riche and so noble,
That whyle he werrid be west · on the wilde Yrisshe,
Henrri was entrid · on the est half,
Whom all the londe loued · in lengthe and in brede,
And ros with him rapely · to riȝtyn his wronge,
ffor he shullde hem serue · of the same aiter.
Thus tȝles me troblid · ffor they trewe were,
And amarride my mynde rith moche · and my wittis eke:
ffor it passid my parceit · and my preifis also,
How so wondirffull werkis · wolde haue an ende..
But in sothe whan they sembled · some dede repente,
As knowyn is in cumpas · of Cristen londis,
That rewthe was, if reson · ne had reffourmed
The myssecheff and the mysserule · that men tho in endurid.
I had pete of his passion · that prince was of Walis,
And eke oure crouned kynge · till Crist woll no lenger;
And as a lord to his liage · thouȝ I lite hade,
All myn hoole herte was his · while he in helthe regnid.

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10. MS. wyle.
12. *Cf.* He had be lord of þat *londe · in lengthe and in brede*; C. 4. 261.
13. *Cf.* Two *rysen rapliche* · and rounede to-geders; C. 7. 383. MS. rosse (*for* ros). 15. MS. where. 22. *For* endurid, *read* durede.

And ffor I wuste not witterly · what shulde ffall,
Whedir god wolde ȝeue him grace · sone to amende,
To be oure gioure aȝeyn · or graunte it another,
This made me to muse · many tyme and ofte,
For to written him a writte · to wissen him better,
And to meuve him of mysserewle · his mynde to reffresshe,
ffor to preise the prynce · that paradise made,
To ffullfill him with ffeith · and ffortune aboue,
And not to grucchen a grott · aȝeine godis sonde,
But mekely to suffre · what so him sente were.
And ȝif him list to loke · a leef other tweyne,
That made is to mende him · of his myssededis,
And to kepe him in confforte · in Crist and nouȝt ellis,
I wolde be gladde that his gost · myȝte glade be my wordis,
And grame if it greued him · be god that me bouȝte!
Ther nys no gouernour on the grounde · ne sholde gye him the better—
And euery Cristen kyng · that ony croune bereth,
So he were lerned on the langage · my lyff durst I wedde—
ȝif he waite well the wordis · and so werche therafter;
ffor all is tresour of the trinite · that turneth men to gode.
And as my body and my beste · ouȝte to be my liegis,
So rithffully be reson · my rede shulde also,
ffor to conceill, and I couthe · my kyng and the lordis;
And ther-ffor I ffondyd · with all my ffyue wyttis
To traueile on this tretis · to teche men ther-after
To be war of wylffulnesse · lest wondris arise.
And if it happe to ȝoure honde · beholde the book onys,

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27. MS. wost; *but see* Pass. i. ll. 49 *and* 64, *below*.
30. *Cf.* *Musynge* on þis meteles · a myle-wey ich ȝeode;
And *meny tymes* this meteles · *made me* to studie; C. 10. 296.
35. *Cf.* On *god*, whenne me greued ouht · and *grucched of hus sonde*; C. 7. 111.
37. *Cf.* First I lerned to lye · *a leef other tweyne*; B. 5. 203.
43. MS. grounde (*an obvious error for* croune; *copied from* l. 42).
44. *Cf.* Ich dorst haue *leid my lyue* · and no lasse *wedde*; C. 4. 260.
46. *Cf.* Ther treuthe is, þe trone · þat *trinite* ynne sitteþ . .
Than treuthe & trewe loue · ys no *tresour* bettere; C. 2. 134–136.
47. MS. oute.
48. *Cf.* —*bi Reson*, And *Rihtfuliche*, &c.; A. 1. 92, 93; *also*, For *ryhtfulliche reson*; C. 2. 50.
49. MS. couȝthe.
50. *For* ffondyd, MS. *has* ffordyd, *altered to* ffondyd. Mr. Wright *prints* ffordyd, *but see* B. 15. 327; *and cf.* C. 2. 15.

And redeth on him redely · rewis an hundrid,
And if ȝe sauere sum dell · se it fforth ouere,
ffor reson is no repreff · be the rode of Chester!
And if ȝe ffynde ffables · or ffoly ther-amonge,
Or ony ffantasie yffeyned · that no ffrute is in,
Lete ȝoure conceill corette it · and clerkis to-gedyr,
And amende that ys amysse · and make it more better:
ffor-ȝit it is secrette · and so it shall lenger,
Tyll wyser wittis · han waytid it ouere,
That it be lore laweffull · and lusty to here.
ffor witterly, my will is · that it well liked
ȝou and all ȝouris · and yonge men leueste,
To be-nyme hem her noyes · that neweth hem ofte.
ffor and they mvse theron · to the myddwardis,
They shall fynde ffele ffawtis · ffoure score and odde,
That youghthe weneth alwey · that it be witte euere.
And thouȝ that elde opyn it · other-while amonge,
And poure on it preuyly · and preue it well after,
And constrewe ich clause · with the *culorum*,
It shulde not apeire hem a peere · a prynce thouȝ he were,
Ne harme nother hurte · the hyghest of the rewme,
But to holde him in hele · and helpe all his ffrendis.
And if ony word write be · that wrothe make myghte
My souereyne, that suget · I shulde to be,
I put me in his power · and preie him, of grace,
To take the entent of my trouthe · that thouȝte non ylle.
ffor to wrath no wyght · be my wyll neuere,
As my soule be saff · ffrom synne at myn ende.
The story is of non estate · that stryuen with her lustus,
But tho that ffolwyn her fflessh · and here ffrelle thouȝtis;
So if my conceyll be clere · I can saie no more,
But ho be greued in his gost · gouerne him better,
And blame not the berne · that the book made,
But the wickyd will · and the werkis after.

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55. *Cf.* ȝut *sauereþ* me nat þi sawe; C 11. 107.
56. *Cf. bi þe rode of Chestre*; B. 5. 467.
68. *The* MS. *omits* fynde. 69. MS. youghe.
72. *Cf.* þe *culorum* of þis *clause*; A. 3. 264; C. 12. 248.
78. *Cf.* Thenne knelede ich on my knees · and criede hure *of grace*,
And *preide hure* pytously; C. 2. 76, 77.

Passus Primus.

NOW, Richard the redeles · reweth on· 3ou-self,
That lawelesse leddyn 3oure lyf · and 3oure peple bothe;
ffor thoru the wyles and wronge · and wast in 3oure tyme,
3e were lyghtlich y-lyfte · ffrom that 3ou leef thou3te,
And ffrom 3oure willffull werkis · 3oure will was chaungid,
And rafte was 3oure riott · and rest, ffor 3oure daiez
Weren wikkid thoru 3oure cursid counceill · 3oure karis weren newed,
And coueitise hath crasid · 3oure croune ffor euere!

Radix omnium malorum cupiditas.

Of alegeaunce now lerneth · a lesson other tweyne,
Wher-by it standith · and stablithe moste—
By drede, or be dyntis · or domes vntrewe,
Or by creaunce of coyne · ffor castes of gile,
By pillynge of 3oure peple · 3oure prynces to plese;
Or that 3oure wylle were wrou3te · thou3 wisdom it nolde;—
Or be tallage of 3oure townes · without ony werre,
By rewthles routus · that ryffled euere,
By preysinge of polaxis · that no pete hadde,
Or be dette ffor thi dees · deme as thou ffyndist;
Or be ledinge of lawe · with loue well ytemprid.
Though this be derklich endited · ffor a dull nolle,
Miche nede is it not · to mwse ther-on,
ffor as mad as I am · thou3 I litill kunne,
I cowde it discryue · in a ffewe wordys;
ffor legiance without loue · litill thinge availith.
But graceles gostis · gylours of hem-self,
That neuere had harnesse · ne hayle-schouris,
But walwed in her willis · ffor-weyned in here youthe,
They sawe no manere si3th · saff solas and ese,

9. *Cf.* Furst I *leornede* to ly3e · *a lessun or tweyne*; A. 5. 117.
15. MS. towunes *or* townnes.
16. MS. routus, *altered to* routes, *unnecessarily*.
17. *Cf.* Or Poule þe apostle · *þat no pitee hadde*; B. 10. 424; C. 12. 268.
19. *Cf.* And *ledeþ þe lawe* as hure lust · and *louedayes* makeþ; C. 4. 196.
24. *Cf.* Lawe *with-outen loue* · leye þere a bene! B. 11. 165.
27. *Cf.* And lete no wynnynge *forwene* hem · *þe while þei ben 3onge*; C. 6. 138.

And cowde no mysse amende · whan mysscheff was vp,
But sorwed ffor her lustus · of lordschipe they hadde,
And neuere ffor her trespas · oo tere wolde they lete!
3e come to 3oure kyngdom · er 3e 3oure-self knewe,
Crouned with a croune · that kyng vnder heuene
Mi3te not a better · haue bou3te, as I trowe;
So ffull was it ffilled · with vertuous stones,
With perlis of pris · to punnysshe the wrongis,
With rubies rede · the ri3th for to deme,
With gemmes and Iuellis · Ioyned to-gedir,
And pees amonge the peple · ffor peyne of thi lawis.
It was ffull goodeliche ygraue · with gold al aboute;
The braunchis aboue · boren grett charge;
With diamauntis derue · y-doutid of all
That wrou3te ony wrake · within or withoute;
With lewte and loue · yloke to thi peeris,
And sapheris swete · that sou3te all wrongis,
Ypoudride wyth pete · ther it be ou3te,
And traylid with trouthe · and treste al aboute;
ffor ony cristen kynge · a croune well ymakyd.
But where this croune bicome · a clerk were that wuste;
But so as I can · declare it I thenke,
And nempne no name; · but tho that nest were,
ffull preuyly they pluckud · thy power awey,
And reden with realte · 3oure rewme thoru-oute,
And as tyrauntis, of tiliers · token what hem liste,
And paide hem on her pannes · whan her penyes lacked.
ffor non of 3oure peple · durste pleyne of here wrongis,
ffor drede of 3oure dukys · and of here double harmes.
Men my3tten as well haue huntyd · an hare with a tabre,

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29. *Cf.* þi *myschief is vppe*; B. 4. 72. 30. MS. lordschpe.
33—37. *Cf.* And *coroned with a corone* · þe *kynge hath no betere*; . . .
And þer-on *rede rubies* · and oþer *riche stones*; C. 3. 11, 13.
40. MS. abou3te, *both here and in* ii. 2, 15, *and* 102. *Cf. gold al a-boute*; C. 3. 158.
42, 45. *Cf.* And *diamantz* of derrest pris · and double manere *safferes*; B. 2. 13; *see the whole passage.* MS. y-douutid. 43. MS. wroute.
44. *Cf.* Ac *loue* and louhnesse · and *leaute* to-gederes; C. 4. 447.
46. MS. Y-pouudride. 49. *Cf.* I *ne wot where þei bicome*; B. 5. 651.
55. *Cf.* the account of how 'Pees' came by his '*panne* blody'; C. 5. 74.
56. *Cf.* For *pore men der nat pleyne* · ne here pleinte shewe; C. 4. 214; *see the whole passage.*

As aske ony mendis · ffor that thei mysdede,
Or of ony of her men · thou3 men wulde plete,
ffor all was ffelawis and ffelawschepe · that 3e with fferde,
And no soule persone · to punnyshe the wrongis;
And that maddid thi men · as thei nede muste.
ffor wo, they ne wuste · to whom ffor to pleyne.
ffor, as it is said · by elderne dawis,
'Ther gromes and the goodmen · beth all eliche grette,
Well wo beth the wones · and all that woneth ther-in!'
They ladde 3ou with loue · that 3oure lawe dradde,
To deme 3oure dukys myssdedis · so derue thei were.
Thus was 3oure croune crasid · till he was cast newe,
Thoru partinge of 3oure powere · to 3oure paragals.
Thus lacchide they with laughinge · and lourid longe after,
But ffrist sawe they it not · ne youre-self nother;
ffor all was wisliche ywrou3te · as 3oure witte demed,
And no ffautis y-ffounde · till ffortune aperid.
But had 3oure croune be kepte · that comons it wiste,
Ther nadde morder ne mysscheff · be amonge the grette.
Thus 3oure cautell to the comoune · hath combred 3ou all,
That, but if god helpe · 3oure heruest is ynne.
Wyteth it not 3oure counceill · but wyteth it more 3oure-self,
The ffortune that ffallyn is · to ffeitheles peple;
And wayte well my wordis · and wrappe hem togedir,
And constrwe thoru clergie · the clause in thin herte,
Of maters that I thenke · to meve ffor the best
ffor kyngis and kayseris · comynge here-after.
Whane 3e were sette in 3oure se · as a sir aughte,
Ther carpinge comynliche · of conceill arisith,
The cheuyteyns cheef · that 3e chesse euere
Weren all to yonge of 3eris · to yeme swyche a rewme;
Other hobbis 3e hadden · of Hurlewaynis kynne,
Reffusynge the reule · of realles kynde.

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67. MS. Woll.

72. *Cf.* þere was *laughyng* and *louryng*; B. 5. 344. 75. MS. fauutis.

80. *misspelt* Wytteth (*alt. to* Wyteth) *the first time, and* wyteh *the second time, in the* MS.

83. MS. *omits* þoru. *Cf. Clerkus* þat were confessours · couplede hem togederes *To construe this clause*; C. 5. 146, 147.

84. *Cf.* I dorste *meue* no *matere*; C. 11. 118. 85. MS. Kayseceris.

And whane ȝoure counceill I-knewe · ȝe come so at ones,
ffor to leue on her lore · and be led be hem,
ffor drede that they had · of demynge ther-after,
And ffor curinge of hem-self · cried on ȝou euere,
ffor to hente hele · of her owen greues,
More than ffor wurschepe · that they to ȝou owed,
They made ȝou to leue · that regne ȝe ne myȝte,
Withoute busshinge adoune · of all ȝoure best ffrendis,
Be a ffals colour · her caris to wayve,
And to holde hem in hele · if it happe myȝte.
ffor trostith rith treuly · and in no tale better,
All that they moued · or mynged in that mater,
Was to be sure of hem-self · and siris to ben y-callid;
ffor that was all her werchinge · in worde and in dede.
But had ȝe do duly · and as a duke oughte,
The ffrist that ȝou fformed · to that ffals dede,
He shulde have hadde hongynge · on hie on the fforckis,
Thouȝ ȝoure brother y-born · had be the same.
Than wolde other boynardis · haue ben abasshyd
To haue meved ȝou to ony maters · that mysscheff had ben ynne.
But ffor ȝe cleued to knavis · in this cas I avowe,
That boldid thi burnes · to belde vppon sorowe,
And stirid ȝou stouttely · till ȝe stombled all.

Passus Secundus.

But moche now me merueilith · and well may I in sothe,
Of ȝoure large leuerey · to leodis aboute,
That ȝe so goodliche ȝaf · but if gile letted,
As hertis y-heedyd · and hornyd of kynde,
So ryff as they ronne · ȝoure rewme thoru-oute,
That non at ȝoure nede · ȝoure name wolde nempne
In ffersnesse ne in ffoltheed · but ffaste ffle away-ward,
And some stode astonyed · and stared ffor drede,
ffor eye of the Egle · that oure helpe brouȝte.
And also in sothe · the seson was paste

98. MS. myste.
Passus ii. 2. MS. abouȝte; *so also in* l. 15.
111. MS. myssheff.
9. MS. brouute.

ffor hertis y-heedid · so hy and so noble
To make ony myrthe · ffor mowtynge that nyghed.
That bawtid ȝoure bestis · of here bolde chere;
They seuerid and sondrid · ffor somere hem ffaylid,
And fflowen in-to fforest · and ffeldis aboute,
All the hoole herde · that helde so to-gedir;
But ȝet they had hornes · half a ȝere after.
Now liste me to lerne · ho me lere coude,
What kynnes conceyll · that the kyng had,
Or meued him most · to merke his liegis,
Or serue hem with signes · that swarmed so thikke
Thoru-oute his lond · in lengthe and in brede,
That ho so had hobblid · thoru holtes and tounes,
Or y-passid the patthis · ther the prynce dwellyd,
Of hertis or hyndis · on hassellis brestis,
Or some lordis leuere · that the lawe stried,
He shulde haue y-mette · mo than y-nowe.
ffor they acombrede the contre · and many curse seruid,
And carped to the comounes · with the kyngys mouthe,
Or with the lordis · ther they be-lefte were,
That no renke shulde rise · reson to schewe.
They plucked the plomayle · ffrom the pore skynnes,
And schewed her signes · ffor men shulde drede
To axe ony mendis · ffor her mys-dedis.
Thus leuerez ouere-loked · ȝoure liegis ichone;
ffor tho that had hertis · on hie on her brestis
ffor the more partie · I may well avowe,
They bare hem the bolder · ffor her gay broches,
And busshid with her brestis · and bare adoune the pouere,
Lieges that loued ȝou the lesse · ffor her [lither] dedis.
So, trouthe to telle · as toune-men said,
ffor on that ȝe merkyd · ȝe myssed ten schore
Of homeliche hertis · that the harme hente.
Thane was it ffoly · in ffeith, as me thynketh,
To sette siluer in signes · that of nouȝt serued.

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16. to- *in* to-gedir *is supplied in the* MS. *in a later hand.*
17. a *is supplied in the* MS. *in a later hand;* cf. 'half *a* ȝere' in C. 3. 238.
25. MS, Or (*wrongly*). 35. MS. ichonne.
37. *Cf. ich may it wel avowe;* C. 4. 315. 40. MS. yuell (*for* lither).
45. *Cf.* Bere no *suluer* ouer see · that kynges *sygne* shewe þ; C. 5. 126.

I not what ȝou eylid · but if it ese were;
ffor ffrist at ȝoure anoyntynge · alle were ȝoure owene,
Bothe hertis and hyndis · and helde of non other;
No lede of ȝoure lond · but as a liege aughte,
Tyl ȝe, of ȝoure dulnesse · deseueraunce made,
Thoru ȝoure side signes · that shente all the browet,
And cast adoun the crokk · the colys amyd.

Omne regnum in se diuisum desolabitur; luce xj°. c°.

ȝit am I lewde · and litill good schewe,
To coueyte knowliche · of kyngis wittis,
Or wilne to witte · how was the mevynge,
That [ladde] ȝou to lykynge · ȝoure liegis to merke,
That loued ȝou full lelly · or leuerez beganne,
And as redy to ride · or renne at ȝoure heste,
As wyghte myghte wilne · wonnynge vppon erthe,
Tyll leuerez hem lette · and lordyns wrongis,
As ȝoure-self ffonde well · whane ffortune ȝou ffolwyd.
ffor whan ȝe list to lene · to ȝoure owen lymmes,
They were so ffeble and ffeynte · ffor ffaute of ȝoure lawe,
And so ffeble and wayke · wexe in the hammes,
That they had no myghte · to amende ȝoure greues,
Ne to bere byrthen · ȝoure banere to helpe.
But it longith to no liegeman · his lord to anoye,
Nother in werk ne in word · but if his witt ffayle.
"No, redely," quod Reson · "that reule I alowe;
Displese not thi demer · in dede ne in wordis,
But if the liste ffor to lede · thi lyf in dissese.
But ȝif god haue grauntyd the · grace ffor to knowe
Ony manere mysscheff · that myȝtte be amendyd,
Schewe that to thi souereyne · to schelde him ffrom harmes;
ffor, and he be blessid · the better the be-tydyth
In tyme ffor to telle him · ffor thi trewe herte."
Now, ffor to telle trouthe · thus than me thynketh,

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46. *Cf.* Ich *wot* wel, quath hunger · *what* syknesse ȝow *ailep*; C. 9. 271.
52. *Cf.* þat cast for to kele a *crokke* · and saue the fatte aboue; C. 22. 280.
56. MS. *omits* ladde. 57. Cf. And to *loue* me *lelly*; B. 1. 78.
58. *Cf.* ȝemen · to *rennen* and to *ryde*; C. 4. 271.
61. ffolwyd; *the word* ffayled *is writen above, and is perhaps a better reading.*
63. MS. ffauȝte. 68. *Cf.* As *in workes* and *in wordes*; C. 3. 94.
69. *Cf.* Forþy, *reson, redelyche*; C. 5. 184.

That no manere meyntenour · shulde merkis bere,
Ne haue lordis leuere · the lawe to apeire,
Neither bragger ne boster · ffor no bremme wordis,
But ho so had kunnynge · and conscience bothe,
To stonde vnstombled · and stronge in his wittis,
Lele in his leuynge · leuyd be his owen,
That no manere mede · shulde make him wrye,
ffor to trien a trouthe · be-twynne two sidis,
And lette ffor no lordschep · the lawe to susteyne,
Whane the pore pleyned · that put were to wrongis.
And I were of conceill · by Crist that me bouȝte,
He shuld haue a signe · and sum-what be ȝere,
ffor to kepe his contre · in quiete and in reste.
This were a good grounde · so me god helpe!
And a trewe tente · to take and to ȝeue,
And ony lord of this londe · that leuerez vsith.
But how the gayes han y-gon · god wotte the sothe
Amonge myȝtfull men · alle these many ȝeris;
And, whedir the grounde of ȝifte · were good other ille,
Trouthe hathe determyned · the tente to the ende,
And reson hath rehersid · the resceyte of all.
ȝit, I trowe, ȝoure entente · at the ffrist tyme,
Was, as I wene, ȝif I well thenke · in multitude of peple,
That ȝe were the more myȝtier · ffor the many signes
That ȝe and ȝoure seruauntis · aboute so thikke sowid;
And that they were more tristi · and trewer than other,
To loue ȝou ffor the leuere · that legeaunce stroied;
Or ellis ffor a skylle · that skathed ȝoure-self,
That comounes of contre · in costis aboute
Sholde knowe be hir quentise · that the kyng loued hem
ffor her priuy prynte · passinge another.
ȝif that was ȝoure purpos · it passith my wittis
To deme discrecioun · of ȝoure well-doynge!
Thus were ȝe disceyued · thoru ȝoure duble hertis,
That neuere weren to truste · so god saue my soule!

80. *Cf.*—*braggynge · abosted,* &c.; C. 9. 152.
82. *Cf.* to *stomble,* yf he *stande;* C. 11. 35.
93. *For* And *read* For?
97. *Cf.* Til *trewþe hadde ytermenyd* · here trespas to *þe ende;* C. 2. 93.
106. MS. abouȝte; *so also in* ll. 102, 152, 157, 182, 186. Cf. Yf þei knew eny *countreie* · oþer *costes aboute;* C. 11. 12.

But had the good Greehonde · be not agreued,
But cherischid as a cheffeteyne · and cheff of ȝoure lese,
ȝe hadde had hertis ynowe at ȝoure wille · to go and to ride.
And also in serteyne · the sothe ffor to telle,
I wondir not hyly · thouȝ heed-dere thou ffailid;
ffor litill on ȝoure lyf · the list ffor to rewe
On rascaile that rorid · with ribbis so lene,
ffor ffaute of her ffode · that fflatereris stelen,
And euere with here wylis and wast · ofte they hem anoyed,
That pouerte hem prickid · ffull preuyliche to pleyne,
But where, they ne wyste · ne ho it wolde amende!
Thus ȝe derid hem vnduly · with droppis of anger,
And stonyed hem with stormes · that stynted neuere,
But plucked and pulled hem · anon to the skynnes,
That the ffresinge ffrost · ffreted to here hertis.
So whanne ȝoure hauntelere dere · were all ytakyn,
Was non of the rasskayle · aredy ffull growe,
To bere ony bremme heed · as a best aughte,
So wyntris wedir · hem wessh with the snowis,
With many derke mystis · that maddid her eyne.
ffor well mowe ȝe wyttyn · and so mowe we all,
That harde is the somer · ther sonne schyneth neuere.
ȝe ffostrid and ffodid · a ffewe of the best,
And leyde on hem lordschipe · aleyne vppon other,
And bereued the raskall · that rith wolde thei hadde,
And knewe not the caris · ne cursis that walkyd;
But mesure is a meri mene · thouȝ men moche yerne:—

Deus exaudit clamorem pauperum, et iudicat causam eorum; Dauid in psalmis.

Thus be the rotus · ȝoure raskall endurid,
Tyll the blessid bredd · brodid his wyngis,
To couere hem ffrom colde · as his kynde wolde.
Rith as the hous-hennes · vppon londe hacchen,
And cherichen her chekonys · ffro chele of the wynter,
Ryth so the hende Egle · the heyere of hem all,
Hasteth him in heruest · to houyn his bryddis,

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120. MS. ffauȝte. MS. fflateris. 128. MS. where.
139. *Mesure is* medcyne · *þouȝ þow moche ȝerne;* B. 1. 35; C. 2. 33.
142. Cf. *as hus kynde wolde;* C. 4. 129; and 9. 161.
145. MS. Eyere; *but see* iii. 74.

And besieth him besely · to breden hem ffeedrin,
Tyll her ffre ffedris · be ffulliche y-pynned,
That they haue wynge at her wyll · to wonne vppon hille,
ffor venym on the valeye · hadde ffoule with hem ffare,
Tyll trouthe the triacle · telde somme her sothes.
Thus baterid this bred · on busshes aboute,
And gaderid gomes on grene · ther as they walkyd,
That all the schroff and schroup · sondrid ffrom other.
He mellid so the matall · with the hand-molde,
That [they] lost [of their] lemes · the leuest that they had.
Thus ffoulyd this Faukyn · on ffyldis aboute,
And cauȝte of the kytes · a cartfull at ones,
That rentis and robis · with raveyn euere lauȝte.
ȝit was not the Fawcon · ffull ffed at his likynge,
ffor it cam him not of kynde · kytes to loue.
Than bated he boldeliche · as a brid wolde,
To plewme on his pray · the pol ffro the nekk;
But the blernyed boynard · that his bagg stall,
Where purraile-is pulter · was pynnyd ffull ofte,
Made the Fawcon to ffloter · and fflussh ffor anger,
That the boy hadd be bounde · that the bagge kepte.
But sone ther-after · in a schorte tyme,
As ffortune ffolwith · ech ffode till his ende,
This lorell that ladde · this loby awey
Ouere ffrithe and fforde · ffor his ffals dedis,
Lyghte on the lordschepe · that to the brid longid,
And was ffelliche ylauȝte · and luggid ffull ylle,
And brouȝte to the brydd · and his blames rehersid
Preuyly at the parlement · amonge all the peple.
Thus hawkyd this Egle · and houed aboue,
That, as god wolde · that gouerneth all thingis,
Ther nas kyte ne krowe · that kareyne hantid
That he ne [lauȝte] with his lynage · ne louyd ffull sone.
ffor wher so they fferde · be ffryth or be wones,
Was non of hem all · that him hide myȝth,

149. MS. heue (*for* haue).
151. *Cf.* For *treuthe* telleþ þat loue · ys *tryacle* for synne; C. 2. 147.
156. MS. *omits* þey *and* of þeir.
158. MS. kuyttis, *with* kytes *written above; see* l. 161.
170. MS. hadde (*for* ladde). 179. MS. *omits* lauȝte.

But cam with him a reclayme · ffro costis aboute,
And ffell with her ffetheris · fflat vppon the erthe,
As madde of her mynde · and mercy be-sou3te,
They my3te not aschonne · the sorowe they had serued.
So lymed leues · were leyde all aboute,
And panteris preuyliche · pight vppon the grounde,
With grennes of good heere · that god him-self made,
That where so they walkid · they waltrid dounwardis;
And euere houed the Egle · on hie on the skyes,
And kenned clerliche · as his kynde axith,
Alle the preuy poyntis · that the pies wrou3th.

Passus Tercius.

NOW leue we this beu brid · till I restore,
ffor mater that my mynde · is meued in now,
That whi the hie hertis · her hele so mysside,
That pasture axid · rith to here pure wombis;
I wolle schewe as I sawe · till I se better,
And if I walke out of the wey · I wolle me repente.
Now herkeneth, hende men · how that me thynkyth,
Sauynge souereynes · and sages avise,
That the moste myscheff · vppon molde on
Is demed the dede · y-do a3eins kynde.
3it clereth this clause · no-thinge my wittis,
With out more mater · what it mene wolde.
I mene of the hertis · that hautesse of 3eris,
That pasture prikkyth · and her preuy age;
Whan they han hoblid on the holte · an hundrid of 3eris,
That they ffeblen in ffleissh · in ffelle, and in bones,
Her kynde is to keuere · if they cacche my3th
Adders that harmen · alle hende bestis;
Thoru busschis and bromes · this beste, of his kynde,
Secheth and sercheth · tho schrewed wormes,
That steleth on the stedis · to stynge hem to deth;

183. *Cf.* platte hure to þe erthe; C. 7. 3.
191. *Cf.* ri3te *as kynde axeth;* B. 2. 27.
Passus iii. 9. *Cf.* *þe moste myschif on molde* · mounteþ vp faste; C. 1. 65.
18. MS. armen, *with* h *supplied above the line.*

And whanne it happeth the herte · to hente the edder,
He putyth him to peyne · as his pray asketh,
And ffedith him on the venym · his ffelle to anewe,
To leue at more lykynge · a longe tyme after.
This is clergie, hir kynde · coltis nat to greue,
Ne to hurlle with haras · no Hors well atamed,
Ne to stryue with Swan · thouȝ it sholle werre,
Ne to bayten on the Bere · ne bynde him nother,
Ne to wilne to woo · that were hem ny sibbe,
Ne to liste ffor to loke · that her alie bledde;
This was aȝeins kynde · as clerkis me tolde:

Propter ingratitudinem liber homo reuocatur in seruitutem, ut in stimulo compunccionis, et in lege ciuili.

And therffor the hertis · here hele so myssid,
And myȝte nat passe the poynte · of her prime age.
Now constrew ho so kunne · I can saie no more,
But ffare I wolle to the ffowle · that I beffore tolde.
Off all billid breddis · that the bough spareth,
The propirte of partriche · to preise me lustith,
That in the somer seson · whane sittinge nyeth,
That ich ffoule with his ffere · ffolwith his kynde,
This brid be a bank · bildith his nest,
And heipeth his eiren · and hetith hem after.
And whane the dame hath ydo · that to the dede longith,
And hopith ffor to hacche · or heruest begynne,
Thanne cometh ther a congioun · with a grey cote,
As not of his nolle · as he the nest made,
Another proud partriche · and precyth to the nest,
And preuylich pirith · til the dame passe,
And sesith on his sete · with hir softe plumes,
And houeth the eyren · that the hue laide,
And with hir corps keuereth hem · till that they kenne,
And ffostrith and ffodith · till ffedris schewe,

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23. *Cf. as* þe worlde *asketh*; C. 1. 21. 25. *Cf. a longe tyme after;* C. 8. 203.
26. nat *above the line.* 27. MS. ne.
34. *Cf.* Whoso *passeth* þat *poynt;* C. 2. 98.
39. *Cf.* In a *somer sesoun;* C. 1. 1.
41. *Cf.* Briddes I hihelde · þat in buskes made nestes; B. 11. 336; and compare the whole passage in B. 11. 318-353 with the context.
42. MS. heires, *which is obviously a blunder; for see* l. 50, *below. Heires* = heirs; but *eiren* = eggs.

And cotis of kynde · hem keuere all aboute.
But as sone as they styffe · and that they steppe kunne,
Than cometh and crieth · her owen kynde dame,
And they ffolwith the vois · at the ffrist note,
And leueth the lurker · that hem er ladde,
ffor the schrewe schrapid · to selde ffor her wombis,
That her lendys were lene · and leued with hunger.
But than the dewe dame · dineth hem swythe,
And ffostrith hem fforthe · till they ffle kunne.
'What is this to mene, man?' · maiste thou axe,
'ffor it is derklich endited · ffor a dull panne;
Wherffore I wilne · ȝif it thi will were,
The partriche propurtes · by whom that thou menest?'
A! Hicke Heuyheed! · hard is thi nolle
To cacche ony kunnynge · but cautell bigynne!
Herdist thou not with eeris · how that I er tellde,
How the Egle in the est · entrid his owene,
And cried and clepid · after his owen kynde briddis,
That weren anoyed in his nest · and norished ffull ille,
And well ny yworewid · with a wronge leder?
But the nedy nestlingis · whan they the note herde
Of the hende Egle · the heyer of hem all,
Thei busked ffro the busches · and breris that hem noyed,
And burnisched her beekis · and bent to-him-wardis,
And ffolowid him ffersly · to ffighte ffor the wrongis;
They bablid with her billis · how thei bete were,
And tenyd with twiggis · two and twenty ȝeris.
Thus lafte they the leder · that hem wrong ladde,
And tymed no twynte · but tolled her cornes,
And gaderid the grotus · with gyle, as I trowe.
Than ffolwid they her ffre ffader · as good ffeith wolde,
That he hem ffede shulde · and ffostre fforther,
And bringe hem out of bondage · that they were brouȝth inne.
Thanne sighed the swymmers · ffor the Swan ffailid,
And ffolwid this Faucoun · thoru ffeldus and tounes,
With many ffaire ffowle · thouȝ they ffeynte were,
And heuy ffor the hurte · that the Hors hadde.

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53. MS. abouȝte. 62. *Cf. what is ȝis to mene;* B. 1. 11.
78. *Cf.* And so I *babeled* on my bedes; B. 5. 8.

3it they fferkyd hem fforth · as ffaste as they my3te,
To haue the Egles helpe · of harme that they hadde;
ffor he was heed of hem all · and hieste of kynde,
To kepe the croune · as cronecle tellith.
He blythid the Beere · and his bond braste,
And lete him go at large · to lepe where he wolde.
But tho all the berlingis · brast out at ones,
As ffayne as the ffoule · that fflieth on the skyes
That bosse was vnbounde · and brou3te to his owene.
They gaderid hem to-gedir · on a grette route,
To helpe the heeris · that had many wrongis;
They gaglide fforth on the grene · ffor they greued were,
That her ffrendis were ffalle · thoru ffelouns castis.
They mornyd ffor the morthir · of manffull kny3tis,
That many a styff storme · with-stode ffor the comunes;
They monside the marchall · ffor his myssedede,
That euell coude his craft · whan he clothed the Stede.
And euere as they ffolwide · this Faucoun aboute,
At iche mevinge ffotte · venyauñce they asked
On all that assentid · to that synfull dede.
Arere now to Richard · and reste here awhile,
ffor a preuy poynt · that persith my wittis.
Of ffautis I ffynde · that ffrist dede engendre
Cursidnesse and combraunce · amonge the yonge lordis,
And the wikkid werchinge · that walmed in her daies,
And 3it woll here-after · but wisdome it lette.
That were a lord of lond · that lawe hathe in honde,
That to lyghtliche leueth · or lewte apere,
The tale of a trifflour · in turmentours wede,
That neuere reed good rewle · ne resons bookis!
ffor ben they rayed arith · they recchith no fforther,
But studieth all in stroutynge · and stireth amys euere;
ffor all his witte in his wede · ys wrappid ffor sothe,
More than in mater to amende · the peple that ben mys-led.

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94. MS. brond; Mr Wright *prints* broud, *but surely it is merely* bond, *misspelt* brond *owing to the influence of the following word* braste.
97. MS. was (*for* as). Þanne was I *also fayne* · *as foule* of faire morwe; B. 10. 153; C. 12. 103.
98. MS. brouute. 99. MS. rou3te.
105. MS. Þe (*for* Þey). 107. MS. abou3te. 112. MS. ffauutis.
121. MS. strouutynge, *here and in* l. 134; *but see* l. 189.

ffor I say ffor my-self · and schewe, as me thynchith,
That ho is riall of his ray · that light reede him ffolwith;
ȝit swiche ffresshe ffoodis · beth ffeet in-to chambris,
And ffor her dignesse endauntid · of dullisshe nollis,
And, if thou well waite · of no wight ellis:

Qui mollibus vestiuntur in domibus regum sunt: in euangelio.

Than waite mo wayes · how the while turneth
With gyuleris, Ioyffull · ffor here gery Iaces,
And ffor her wedis so wyde · wise beth y-holde;
They casteth hem to creauñce · the courte ffor to plese,
And hopen to be hied · in hast, yif they myȝthe,
Thoru swiche stif stroutynge · that stroyeth the rewme;
But here wey is all wronge · ther wisdom is ynned,
For they lepith als lyghtly · at the longe goynge,
Out of the domes carte · as he that throff neuere.
ffor they kepeth no coyne · that cometh to here hondis,
But chaunchyth it ffor cheynes · that in Chepe hangith,
And settith all her siluer · in seintis and hornes,
And ffor-doth the coyne · and many other craftis,
And maketh the peple ffor pens-lac · in pointe ffor to wepe;
And ȝit they beth ytake fforth · and her tale leued,
And ffor her newe nysete · nexte to the lordis.
Now, be the lawe of Lydfford · in londe [and] in water
Thilke lewde ladde · ouȝte euyll to thryue,
That hongith on his hippis · more than he wynneth,
And douteth no dette · so dukis hem preise,
But beggith and borwith · of burgeis in tounes
ffurris of ffoyne · and other ffelle-ware,
And not the better of a bene · thouȝ they boru euere.
And, but if the slevis · slide on the erthe,
Thei woll be wroth as the wynde · and warie hem that it made;
And [but] ȝif it were elbowis · adoun to the helis,
Or passinge the knee · it was not acouñted.

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124. Cf. *Ich seye it for my-selue;* C. 5. 134.
126. *Cf.* and *brouȝte* hir *in-to chaumbre;* B. 3. 10.
136. MS. But (*for* For); *wrongly repeated.* MS. lyghly.
140. MS. seimtis (*uncertain*). 142. MS. pephe.
145. MS. ne; *read* and. 148. MS. douȝteth. 150. MS. whare.
153. *Cf.* As *wroth as þe wynd;* C. 4. 486.
154. *Supply* but; *as in* l. 152.

And if Pernell preisid · the plytis bihynde,
The costis were acouñtid · paye whan he myȝth.
The leesinge so likyde · ladies and other,
That they Icied of the Iette · and gyside hem ther-vnder;
And if Felice ffonde ony ffaute · thenne of the makynge,
Yt was y-sent sone · to shape of the newe.
But now ther is a gyse · the queyntest of all,
A wondir coriouse crafte · y-come now of late,
That men clepith kerving · the clothe all to pecis,
That seuene goode sowers · sixe wekes after
Moun not sett the seemes · ne sewe hem aȝeyn.
But ther is a proffit in that pride · that I preise euere.
ffor thei ffor the pesinge paieth · pens ten duble
That the clothe costened · the craft is so dere.
Now if I sothe shall saie · and shonne side tales,
Ther is as moche good witte · in swyche gomes nollis,
As thou shuldist mete of a myst · ffro morwe tyll euen!
ȝit blame I no burne · to be, as him ouȝte,
In comliche clothinge · as his statt axith;
But to ledyn her lust · all here lyff-daies
In quentise of clothinge · ffor to queme sir pride,
And euere-more stroutynge · and no store kepe,
And iche day a newe deuyse · it dullith my wittis
That ony lord of a lond · shulde leue swiche thingis,
Or clepe to his conceill · swiche manere cotis,
Thät loueth more her lustis · than the lore of oure lord.
And if a lord his leuere · lyste ffor to ȝeue,
Ther may no gome ffor goodnesse · gette ther-of but lite,
ffor curtesie, ffor comlynesse · ne ffor his kynde herte,
But rather ffor his rancour · and rennynge ouere peple,
ffor braggynge and ffor bostynge · and beringe vppon oilles,
ffor cursidnes of conscience · and comynge to the assises.
This makyth men mysdo · more than ouȝte ellis,
And to stroute and to stare · and stryue aȝeyn vertu.

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156. *Cf.* He preide *purnele* · here porfil to leue; C. 6. 129.
167. MS. aprffith (*sic*), *with* a profett *written above it.*
172. *Cf.* þow myȝt bet *mete þe myst;* C. 1. 163.
176. *Cf.* In cuntinaunce *of cloþinge* · *queinteliche* de-gyset; A. pr. 24.
188. *Cf.* And *makeþ men mys-do* · meny score tymes; C. 4. 159.

So [be] clergie, the cause · comsith in grette,
Of all manere mysscheff · that men here vsyn.
ffor wolde they blame the burnes · that brou3te newe gysis,
And dryue out the dagges · and all the Duche cotis,
And sette hem a-side · and scorte of hem telle,
And lete hem pleye in the porche · and presse non ynnere,
Ne no proude peniles · with his peynte sleve;
And eke repreue robbers · and riffleris of peple,
fflatereris and ffals men · that no ffeith vseth,
And alle deabolik doeris · dispise hem ichone,
And coile out the kny3tys · that knowe well hem-self,
That were sad of her sawis · and suffre well coude,
And had traueilid in her tyme · and temprid hem-self,
And cherliche cheriche hem · as cheff in the halle,
ffor to ordeyne officeris · and all other thyngis;
Men shulde wete in a while · that the world wolde amende,
So vertue wolde fflowe · whan vicis were ebbid.
But now to the mater · that I be-ffore meved,
Of the gomes so gay · that grace hadde affendid,
And how stille that steddeffaste stode · amonge this reccheles peple,
That had awilled his wyll · as wisdom him taughte:
ffor he drough him to an herne · at the halle ende,
Well homelich yhelid · in an holsume gyse,
Not ouerelonge, but ordeyned · in the olde schappe,
With grette browis y-bente · and a berde eke,
And y-wounde in his wedis · as the wedir axith;
He wondrid in his wittis · as he well my3the,
That the hie housinge · herborowe ne myghte
Halfdell the houshould · but hales hem helped;
But ffor crafte that he coude · caste thenne or be-thenke,
He my3te not wonne in the wones · ffor witt that he vsid;
But, aroutyd ffor his ray · and rebuked ofte,
He had leue of the lord · and of ladies alle,
ffor his good gouernaunce · to go or he drank!

190. MS. *omits* be.
193. *Cf.* let *dagge* hus cloþes; C. 23. 143.
198. MS. fflateris.
201. MS. couude. *So also in* l. 219.
217. MS. houusinge.
220. *Cf.* Lorde, who shal *wonye in* þi *wones;* B. 3. 234.
221. MS. arouutyd.

Ther was non of the mene · that they ne merueilid moche,
How he cam to the courte · and was not y-knowe;
But als sone as they wiste · that Witt was his name,
And that the kyng knewe him not · ne non of his kny3tis,
He was halowid and y-huntid · and y-hote trusse,
And his dwellinge ydemed · a bowe-drawte ffrom hem,
And ich man y-charchid · to schoppe at his croune,
3if he nyhed hem ony nere · than they had him nempned.
The portir with his pikis · tho put him vttere,
And warned him the wickett · while the wacche durid:
"Lete sle him!" quod the sleues · that slode vppon the erthe,
And alle the berdles burnes · bayed on him euere,
And schorned him, ffor his slaueyn · was of the olde schappe.
Thus Malaperte was my3tffull · and maister of hous,
And euere wandrid Wisdom · without the 3atis.
"By him that wrou3te this world!" · quod Wisdom in wrath,
"But 3if 3e woll sumtyme · I walke in amonge 3ou,
I shall fforbede 3ou burnes · the best on this erthe,
That is, gouernance of gettinge · and grace that him ffollwith;
ffor these two trewly · twynned 3et neuere."
And so it ffell on hem, in ffeith · ffor ffautis that they vsid,
That her grace was a-goo · ffor grucchinge chere,
ffor the wronge that they wrou3te · to Wisdom affore.
ffor tristith, als trewly · as tyllinge us helpeth,
That iche rewme vndir roff · of the reyne-bowe
Sholde stable and stonde · be these thre degres:
By gouernaunce of grete · and of good age;
By styffnesse and strengthe · of steeris well y-yokyd,
That beth my3thffull men · of the mydill age;
And be laboreris of lond · that lyfflode ne ffayle.
Thanne wolde [right dome] reule · if reson were amongis us,
That ich leode lokide · what longid to his age,
And neuere ffor to þasse more · oo poynt fforther,
To vsurpe the service · that to sages bilongith,

228. MS. y-hotte. *Cf.* Ouer-al houted out · *and yhote trusse;* C. 3. 228.
241. MS. burnesse. 244. MS. ffau3tis.
248. *Cf.* Þe richest *rewme* · þat *reyne* ouer houeth; B. 3. 207.
249. *Cf.* gan *stable and stynte;* B. 1. 120.
253. *Cf.* And lerne to *labore with londe* · *lest lyflode hym faile;* C. 9. 295.
254. MS. *omits* right dome.

To be-come conselleris · er they kunne rede,
In schenshepe of souereynes · and shame at the last.
ffor it ffallith as well to ffodis · of four and twenty ȝeris,
Or yonge men of yistirday · to ȝeue good redis,
As be-cometh a kow · to hoppe in a cage!
It is not vnknowen · to kunnynge leodis,
That rewlers of rewmes · around all the erthe
Were not yffoundid · at the ffrist tyme
To leue al at likynge · and lust of the world,
But to laboure on the lawe · as lewde men on plowes,
And to merke meyntenourz · with maces ichonne,
And to strie strouters · that sterede aȝeine rithis,
And alle the myssedoers · that they myȝte ffynde,
To put hem in preson · a peere thouȝ he were;
And [not] to rewle as reremys · and rest on the daies,
And spende of the spicerie · more than it nedid,
Bothe wexe and wyn · in wast all aboute,
With deyntes y-doublid · and daunsinge to pipis,
In myrthe with moppis · myrrours of synne.
ȝit fforbede I no burne · to be blithe sum while;
But all thinge hath tyme · ffor to tempre glees:
ffor caste all the countis · that the kyng holdith,
And loke how these lordis · loggen hem-self,
And euere shall thou ffynde · as ffer as thou walkiste,
That wisdom and ouere-wacche · wonneth ffer asundre;
But whane the gouernaunce goth thus · with tho the hous gie shulde,
And letith lyghte of the lawe · and lesse of the peple,
And herkeneth all to honour · and to ese eke,
And that ich wyght with his witte · waite on him euere,
To do hem reuerence aright · thouȝ the rigge brest,
This warmnesse in welth · with wy vppon erthe
Myȝte not longe dure · as doctourz us tellith.
ffor ho so thus leued · his lyff to the ende,
Euere wrappid in welle · and with no wo mette,

---

260. MS. *xxiiij;* to be read *four and twenty*, not *twenty-four*. Cf. l. 79, above.
272. MS. *om.* not.
274. MS. aboutte.
282. MS. What, *probably* by mistake.
284. *Cf.* And *let lyght of* þe *lawe · and lasse of* þe knyght; C. 9. 165.

Myȝte seie that he sawe · that seie was neuere,
That heuene were vnhonge · out of the hookis,
And were boun at his bidding · ȝif it be myȝte!
But clerkis knew I non ȝete · that so coude rede
In bokis y-bounde · thouȝ ȝe brouȝte alle
That ony wy welldith · wonnynge vppon erthe;
ffor in well and in woo · the werld euere turneth,
ȝit ther is kew-kaw · thouȝ he come late,
A new thing that noyeth · nedy men and other,
Whanne realles remeveth · and ridith thoru tounes,
And carieth ouere contre · ther comunes dwelleth,
To preson the pillourz · that ouere the pore renneth;
For that were euene in her weye · if they well ride.
But ȝit ther is a ffoule ffaute · that I ffynde ofte;
They prien affter presentis · or pleyntis ben y-clepid,
And abateth all the billis · of tho that nouȝth bringith;
And ho so grucche or grone · aȝeins her grette willes,
Mey lese her lyff lyghtly · and no lesse weddis.
Thus is the lawe louyd · thoru myȝhty lordis willys,
That meyneteyne myssdoers · more than other peple.
ffor mayntenaunce many day · well more is the reuthe!
Hath y-had mo men · at mete and at melis,
Than ony cristen kynge · that ȝe knewe euere;
ffor, as reson and rith · rehersid to me ones,
Tho ben men of this molde · that most harme worchen.
ffor chyders of Chester · were chose many daies
To ben of conceill ffor causis · that in the court hangid,
And pledid pipoudris · alle manere pleyntis.
They cared ffor no coyffes · that men of court vsyn,
But meved many maters · that man neuer thouȝte,
And ffeyned ffalshed · till they a ffyne had,
And knewe no manere cause · as comunes tolde.
Thei had non other signe · to schewe the lawe
But a preuy pallette · her pannes to kepe,
To hille here lewde heed · in stede of an houe.

---

295. MS. kne. MS. couude. 305. MS. ffauȝte.
309. *Cf.* Ich dorst haue leid *my lyue · and no lasse wedde;* C. 4. 260.
311. *Cf.* To *meyntene mysdoers* · Mede þei take; B. 3. 246.
316. *Cf.* For þise aren *men on þis molde · þat moste harme worcheth;* B. 3. 80.
317. MS. where.

They constrewed quarellis · to quenche the peple,
And pletid with pollaxis · and poyntis of swerdis,
And at the dome-ȝeuynge · drowe out the bladis,
And lente men leuere · of her longe battis.
They lacked alle vertues · that a Iuge shulde haue;
ffor, er a tale were ytolde · they wolde trie the harmes,
Without ony answere · but ho his lyf hatid.
And ho so pleyned to the prince · that pees shulde kepe,
Of these mystirmen · medlers of wrongis,
He was lyghtliche y-lauȝte · and y-luggyd of many,
And y-mummyd on the mouthe · and manaced to the deth.
They leid on thi leigis, Richard · lasshis y-now,
And drede neuere a dele · the dome of the lawe.
Ther nas rial of the rewme · that hem durste rebuke,
Ne Iuge, ne Iustice · that Iewis durste hem deme
ffor oute that thei toke · or trespassid to the peple.
This was a wondir world · ho so well lokyd,
That gromes ouere-grewe · so many grette maistris;
ffor this was the rewle in this rewme · while they here regnyd.
Thouȝ I satte seuenenyght · and slepte ffull selde,
[I miȝte not reche redili · to rekene the nombre]
Of many mo wrongis · than I write coude;
ffor selde were the sergiauntis · souȝte ffor to plete,
Or ony prentise of courte · preied of his wittis,
The while the Degonys domes · weren so endauntid.
Tille oure sire in his see · aboue the seuene sterris,
Sawe the many mysscheuys · that these men dede,
And no mendis ymade · but menteyned euere
Of him that was hiest · y-holde for to kepe
His liegis in lawe · and so her loue gette.
He sente ffor his seruantis · that sembled many
Of baronys and baccheleris · with many briȝth helmes,
With the comunes [of] the contres · they cam all at ones;
And as a duke douȝty · in dedis of armes,
In full reall aray · he rood vppon hem euere,

336. MS. lyghliche. *Cf.* Lorkynge þorw lones · *to-logged of menye;* C. 3. 226.
347. *A line lost; supplied by guess.* 348. MS. Couude.
349. MS. serigauntis. 351. MS. dogonys; *see* l. 362, *below.*
352. *Cf.* by *the seuen sterres;* C. 18. 98.
354. MS. menteyne it, *absurdly.*

Tyll Degon and Dobyn · that mennys doris brastyn,
And were y-dubbid of a duke · ffor her while domes,
Awakyd ffor wecchis · and wast that they vsid,
And ffor her breme blastis · buffettis henten.
Than gan it to calme · and clere all aboute,
That iche man myȝte · ho so mynde hadde,
Se, be the sonne · that so briȝte schewed,
The mone at the mydday · meve, and the sterris,
ffolwinge ffelouns · ffor her ffalse dedis,
Devourours of vetaile · that ffouȝten er thei paide.

Passus Quartus.

FOR where was euere ony cristen kynge · that ȝe euere knewe,
That helde swiche an household · be the half-delle
As Richard in this rewme · thoru myserule of other,
That alle his ffynys ffor ffautis · ne his ffee-ffermes,
Ne ffor-ffeyturis ffele · that ffelle in his daies,
Ne the nownagis · that newed him euere,
As Marche and Moubray · and many mo other,
Ne alle the issues of court · that to the kyng longid,
Ne sellynge, that sowkid · siluer rith ffaste,
Ne alle the prophete of the lond · that the prince owed,
Whane the countis were caste · with the custum of wullus,
Myȝte not areche · ne his rent nother,
To paie the pore peple · that his puruyours toke,
Withoute preiere at a parlement · a poundage biside,
And a fifteneth · and a dyme eke,
And with-all the custum of the clothe · that cometh to ffayres?
And ȝet, ne had creaunce icome · at the last ende,
With the comunes curse · that cleued on hem euere,
They had be drawe to the deuyll · ffor dette that they owed.
And whanne the reot and the reeuell · the rent thus passid,
And no thing y-lafte · but the bare baggis,
Than ffelle it afforse · to ffille hem aȝeyne,
And ffeyned sum ffolie · that ffailid hem neuer,

---

364. MS. *wrongly inserts* And *at the beginning of this line.*
366. MS. abouȝte.
Passus iv. 4. MS. ffauȝtis.

And cast it be colis · with her conceill at euene,
To haue preuy parlement · for profit of hem-self,
And lete write writtis · all in wex closid,
ffor peeris and prelatis · that thei apere shuld,
And sente side sondis · to schreuys aboute,
To chese swiche cheualleris · as the charge wold,
To schewe ffor the schire · in company with the grete.
And whanne it drowe to the day · of the dede-doynge,
That souereynes were semblid · and the schire-knyȝtis,
Than, as her fforme is, ffrist · they begynne to declare
The cause of her comynge · and than the kyngis will.
Comliche a clerk than · comsid the wordis,
And pronouncid the poyntis · aparte to hem alle,
And meved ffor money · more than ffor out ellis,
In glosinge of grette · lest greyues arise.
And whanne the tale was tolde · anon to the ende,
A-morwe thei must, affore mete · mete to-gedir,
The knyȝtis of the comunete · and carpe of the maters,
With citiseyns of shiris · y-sent ffor the same,
To reherse the articlis · and graunte all her askynge.
But ȝit ffor the manere · to make men blynde,
Somme argued aȝein rith · then a good while,
And said, "we beth seruantis · and sallere ffongen,
And y-sent ffro the shiris · to shewe what hem greueth,
And to parle ffor her prophete · and passe no fferthere,
And to graunte of her gold · to the grett wattis
By no manere wronge way · but if werre were;
And if we ben ffalls · to tho us here ffyndeth,
Euyll be we worthy · to welden oure hire."
Than satte summe · as siphre doth in awgrym,
That noteth a place · and no-thing availith;
And some had ysoupid · with Symond ouere euen,
And schewed ffor the schire · and here schew lost;
And somme were tituleris · and to the kyng wente,
And fformed him of foos · that good ffrendis weren,
That bablid ffor the best · and no blame serued
Of kynge ne conceyll · ne of the comunes nother,

25. MS. pproffitt (*sic*). 28. MS. aboute.
35. Cf. *Corteysliche* þe knyȝt *þen* · *comsede þese wordes;* C. 9. 32.

Ho so toke good kepe · to the *culorum*.
And somme slombrid and slepte · and said but a lite;
And somme mafflid with the mouth · and nyst what they mente;
And somme had hire · and helde ther-with euere,
And wolde no fforther affoot · ffor ffer of her maistris;
And some were so soleyne · and sad of her wittis,
That er they come to the clos · acombrid they were,
That thei the conclucioun than · constrewe ne couthe,
No burne of the benche · of borowe nother ellis,
So blynde and so ballid · and bare was the reson.
And somme were so ffers · at the ffrist come,
That they bente on a bonet · and bare a topte saile
Affor the wynde ffresshely · to make a good ffare.
Than lay the lordis a-lee · with laste and with charge,
And bare aboute the barge · and blamed the maister,
That knewe not the kynde cours · that to the crafte longid,
And warned him wisely · of the wedir-side.
Thanne the maste in the myddis · at the monthe ende,
Bowid ffor brestynge · and brou3te hem to lond;
ffor ne had thei striked a strake · and sterid hem the better,
And abated a bonet · or the blast come,
They had be throwe ouere the borde · backewarde ichonne.
And some were acombrid · with the conceill be-ffore,
And wiste well y-now · how it sholde ende,
Or some of the semble · shulde repente.
Some helde with the mo · how it euere wente,
And somme dede rith so · and wolld go no fforther.
Some parled as perte · as prouyd well after,
And clappid more ffor the coyne · that the kyng oweth hem
Thanne ffor comfforte of the comyne · that her cost paied,
And were be-hote hansell · if they helpe wold,
To be seruyd sekirly · of the same siluere.
And some dradde dukis · and Do-well ffor-soke; . . . .

---

61. For *culorum*, see C. 4. 436.
65. *Cf.* That I ne my3te *ferther a-foot;* B. 5. 6.
70. *Cf.* And brynge forth *ballede resones;* C. 12. 38.
75. MS. abou3te. 89. MS. owen.
93. *The rest of the page* (in the MS.) *is blank.*

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